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REFORMERS

BEFORE THE

REFORMATION,

PRINCIPALLY IN

GERMANY AND THE NETHERLANDS,

DEPICTED BY

DR. C. ULLMANN.

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THE TRANSLATION

BY THE

REV. ROBERT MENZIES.

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THE NEED OF A REFORMATION IN REFERENCE TO THE GENERAL SPIRIT OF THE CHURCH AND CERTAIN PARTICULAR ABUSES.

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PREFACE.

W. Gilpin, an English author, wrote in his day biographies of Wickliffe, Lord Cobham, Huss, and Jerome of Prague, whom he entitled the *best-known* of the Reformers prior to Luther. On the work which I now present to the goodwill of the public, I might inscribe the very opposite title, and call it, Biographies of the *least-known* of those early Reformers. In that case, however, it would be requisite, if proper, to annex, that they all the more deserved to be known.

In fact, with few exceptions, the men of whom these volumes treat, and whom, for brevity's sake, I call Reformers, although aware what distinguishes them from those to whom the name is strictly due, are not well known, or rather, are most of them, wholly unknown, whereas other forerunners of the Reformation are mentioned in even the most concise histories of the world, and live in the mouths of all. The way in which this has happened is quite natural. The Reformation, in one aspect, was a fresh conception of the faith and doctrine of the Gospel, formed from a central point of view, then for the first time clearly and vividly recognised. In another aspect, however, it was also a great fact in the history of the Church and of mankind—a conversion of what was previously only known and taught into action and reality—a drama composed of successive magnificent acts, and in which, upon different platforms, the chief monarchs and nations of Europe played the parts. Unless founded upon doctrines genuinely Christian, derived from a legitimate source, and embraced with deep and experimental conviction, or in other words, upon a new and purified faith, such a drama would have

had no true significance, taken no certain hold, and must have passed fruitlessly away. On the other hand, unless faith and doctrine had been immediately carried out into action and reality, both of these must have continued as before confined chiefly to the domain of sentiment, or the school, and no total renovation of religion and ecclesiastical affairs, no Church-reform, extending even to the people, would have ensued. It was only by the union and commixture of knowledge with action, and of faith with practice, that the Reformation became what it really was, a comprehensive renovation of the Christian life and spirit. Of course on both these sides, the way required to be paved and preparations made for it. The two things—a clearer conception of Christianity in the mind, and a testimony in its favour by ostensible acts—must to a certain extent have already existed before they could be combined, as they were into a great and mighty whole. For this reason, we find the Reformation preceded by two descriptions of men, by some who privately, in either a popular or scientific way, seek to impress deeper convictions of the Reformatory doctrines upon themselves and others; and by some, who make their appearance upon the public stage, and by vigorous acts endeavour to bring back the Church to a more proper condition. The former were allowed tranquilly to execute their vocation, remained unembroiled with the hierarchy, and terminated their lives in peace. The latter, however, obliged to attack existing abuses, were unavoidably involved in conflict with the vastly superior power of the Church —a conflict outwardly most unequal and generally desperate, but for these very reasons all the more interesting and memorable. It was their lot to be confessors, and martyrs, and sometimes the founders of parties, who shared their views and their enthusiasm. Hence their lives are imbued with a dramatic and even tragical interest, of a varied and elevating kind. And as action and conflict always appeal more powerfully to the popular sympathies, than research, intelligence, and deep sentiment, and particularly, as the most interesting of all spectacles is outward defeat conjoined with inward victory and triumph, it was quite natural that these champions should, soonest and preferentially, have become the men of the people, and subjects for history and fame. Having once, however, fully ac-

corded their rights to the parties who strove and sacrificed themselves, it is not less the duty of history to exercise impartiality, and not refuse to others what is also their due. By the practical men alone, the Reformation could never have been achieved. They were not always the most highly gifted with Christian intelligence, but in many cases were better fitted to diffuse around them fervour and excitement, than clear insight into the nature of Christianity, and hence, the fire which they kindled not unfrequently blazed with a wild and destructive flame. They may perhaps have produced greater, but they by no means produced deeper and purer effects, than the quiet and intellectual Reformers of the 14th and 15th centuries. For, if we consider what it was, which, ere they appeared upon the stage of the Reformation, made *Luther* and its other heroes what they were, and equipped them for their parts, we shall find that it was by no means the example of a *Huss*, a *Savonarola*, and other martyrs of the kind. Neither was it the writings and doctrines of *Wickliffe*, but totally different elements of Christian experience and theology, with which they nourished their minds. Their spiritual food was derived mainly from the Biblical and sound mystical Divines of Germany and the Netherlands, at the close of the 14th, and in the course of the 15th century—from that school of humble, scriptural, and experimental theologians, of which the calm and contemplative *Staupitz* was to *Luther*, and the noble *Wittenbach* to *Zwingli*, the proximate representatives. If, too, we enquire from what quarter emanated those influences of Christian intelligence and polite learning, which, during the 15th century, in ever-widening circles and encreasing degrees, silently and imperceptibly penetrated through the various classes of the people, and rendered them susceptible of the words and acts of the Reformers, we find ourselves again directed not to the more famous and heroic pioneers of the Reformation, who sacrificed themselves for the great cause, but to those modest men, who, in narrower spheres, and often almost unobserved, employed themselves in educating, training, and quickening those around them. Far from wishing in the least to depreciate the services of the heroes of the faith and their followers, who roused the public mind, we yet feel constrained by historic justice to say, that more was done in the way of enlightening and educating the

people in Christianity by *Gerhard Groot*, and the Brethren of the Common lot—more in the way of spiritualizing the Christian faith and life, by the Dutch and German Mystics—more in the way of purifying Theology and conforming it to Scripture by a *Goch*, a *John of Wesel*, and a *John Wessel*, than from the very nature of the case was possible for the men of conflict and action. The labours of such theologians and societies, educating as they did from the centre outwards, were absolutely indispensable to what constituted the very essence of the Reformation, viz., its belief and theology. Inasmuch, however, as their labours were for the most part of limited outward extent, and destitute of loud and ostensible parade, history, though it has not perhaps altogether forgotten them, may yet at least be said to have placed them in the back-ground. It is therefore, all the more pleasing a task to pay to them upon this field the debt of gratitude due by evangelical theology. Neither do we here intend to enquire to which of the two belongs the palm of superiority—to those who quietly planted and nurtured, or to those who strenuously dared and struggled? It is enough to know that both were indispensable if the object in view was to be gained. Each of them fulfilled their own allotted mission, and if the more quiet labourers have less attraction for lovers of the dramatic in historical compositions, they are all the more important for the scientific theologian, for whom the development of the inner life, and the cultivation of theological ideas, constitute the radical elements of Church history.

We have something else to add—Germany, including Switzerland and the Netherlands, was indisputably the centre of that great movement in the history of the world, which we call the Reformation. It is remarkable, however, and not a little surprising, that this has not been long ere now more deeply felt, and more frequently expressed, that for centuries so much has been said of its English, its Bohemian, its French, and even of its Italian, but scarcely a word of its German, precursors. I here mean Germany in the widest sense, as comprising those countries connected with the fatherland by the Rhine, the most German of rivers, and by the German language, moulded though it be into a peculiar dialect. Is it possible that *Luther* and his confederates, or that *Zwingli* and his, or that the men whom we see taking the field

for the pure evangelical doctrine on the banks of the Rhine, downwards to the Netherlands, should have dropped as Reformers from heaven, or received their impulse and insight from a foreign land? No, certainly. Even the law of historical continuity would require us to suppose corresponding intermediate links, labourers who prepared this particular soil. We know, however, as matter of fact, that in both Germany and the Netherlands, there were very distinguished precursors of the Reformation, who unquestionably exercised a far greater influence upon our Reformers than any foreigners ever did. To give but a few instances, Where do we find *Luther* speaking of the impression produced upon his religious and theological development by any of the more distinguished foreigners, in language like that which he uses of his less known countrymen in Germany and Holland? Of John of Wesel, he says, that he had studied his writings for his degree—of the Brethren of the Common lot, that they were the first to receive the Gospel—of Wessel, that it might seem as if he *(Luther)* had derived from him all he knew—of *Tauler*, that, neither in the Latin nor German tongue, does there exist a more sound or more evangelical theology than his—of the Author of the "Deutsche theologie," that no one had instructed him better what God and Christ and all things are—and finally of *Staupitz*, that by his means the light of the Gospel had first dawned on his heart, and that his words had stuck like the arrows of a strong man in his mind? So far as I know, *Luther* says nothing like this of any pioneer of the Reformation who was not a German, and therefore, in treating of the historical causes of the great event, these persons must not be left out of view. On the contrary, we are loudly called upon to depict their character and labours at length, as the only way to understand how the efforts of the Reformers attained their great success in Germany and the contiguous lands, and how of all countries that was the one which not only became, but could not avoid becoming, the home of the Reformation. Nowhere else were the preparations so deep and effectual for Christian knowledge and a purer and more spiritual Christian practice.

If, however, the object primarily proposed in the following work was to do justice to certain less known, but most deserving pioneers of the Reformation, and particularly to throw new light

upon the steps of transition to it in Germany and the Netherlands, the author was obliged by the nature of the case to keep in view another and more general object, viz., a more complete, profound, and correct knowledge of the Reformation itself, which must necessarily be promoted by a comprehensive acquaintance with the steps which led to it and the measures by which it was prepared. In all cases, a knowledge of the cause and a knowledge of the effect mutually depend, and reflect light upon each other, and in no case more than the present. We can only obtain a right insight into the Reformation by means of a complete apprehension of the rudiments from which it sprung. Its substantial spirit was already contained in the doctrine and efforts of its pioneers, and in these is even more prominent and conspicuous than in the initiatory efforts of the Reformers themselves, which were sometimes made under inward and outward conflicts. Let us indicate this in a few chief points.

The Reformation, viewed in its most general character, is the reaction of Christianity as gospel against Christianity as law. During the Middle Ages, the essential nature of the Christian faith became gradually and progressively misunderstood, until, at last, it was again reduced almost wholly to an objective law—an external ordinance strict and unbending, and which only commanded and threatened. In opposition to the legalism of the Church, however, a heretical and generally pantheistical Antinomianism had been formed, and between these two tendencies, the false letter and the false spirit, the Reformation took the proper medium. Evolving from the word of Scripture more purely and strictly interpreted, the vital spirit, it taught men once more to recognise in Christianity a creative power of God, diffusing fresh life into the deepest roots of our spiritual being, and guiding us from the atonement to sanctification—a free doctrine of grace and faith, of love and spirit, prompting us from the heart outwards to the fulfilment of the law; while, at the same time, it restored the doctrine which is the kernel of St Paul's creed, but which, in the course of time, had been wholly overgrown by the legalism which had crept in. The extent to which this constitutes the very germ of the Reformation, can scarcely be conceived by any other means than an acquaintance with the spiritual manifestations which preceded it. Its forerunners were,

almost more than its agents, under the dominion of a Christianity petrified into law, a sort of legal ecclesiasticism; While, at the same time, as the light of free grace and the Spirit, and a knowledge of the true principle of faith, had beamed upon their minds from the Gospel and the writings of Paul, they apprehended the contrast still more strictly, and stated it still more broadly than the Reformers themselves, though equally hostile to all Antinomianism. Almost all they did—and here we have *John of Goch* particularly in view, who was little known, and laboured in calm retirement—concentrated itself in the struggle which necessarily sprung from this source, and which they maintained in more private and circumscribed circles, as the Reformers afterwards did, in public and on a great scale.

With this fundamental antithesis between law and gospel, others are connected. In the first place there is that between the externalism and the internalism of the religious and moral life. On the legal stand-point, religious and moral things are predominantly conceived and rated as quantities, upon the evangelical, as qualities. In the one case, the stress is laid upon the visible act, upon the character, number, and extent of the works performed—in short, upon what may be weighed and measured in the spiritual life. In the other, it is laid upon what is inmost in the general bias of the mind, upon such imponderable things as faith and sentiment. In the one case, the language is—Be righteous and fulfil all the commandments; in the other—Believe and love out of a pure heart, and then do what you will and must, for all that comes from unfeigned faith and self-denying love is good. This antithesis, which is likewise one of the radical differences between the Old and New covenant, runs, no less than that between law and gospel, through the whole of Church history. Besides being legalized, the mediæval Church had more or less also fallen a prey to the principle of externalism; In opposition to which, however, mysticism—thus also becoming an important preparatory element of the Reformation—asserted the principle of internalism. This it not unfrequently did in a sound and vigorous way, and with great success, but sometimes also with a partial and morbid spiritualism, which by falsely severing the outward from the inward, laid the whole strain upon the latter, and by this means sank into pure indifference

respecting moral actions, and wholly lost sight of the necessity of imbuing with the Christian spirit all that belongs to life. The true pioneers of the Reformation occupy the sounder standpoint of an internalism strictly moral and thoroughly consonant to the practical genius of Christianity. They recognise the love which is the offspring of living faith, and which never remains mere sentiment, but is always and to an equal degree active, as the true fulfilling of the law. They estimate every outward work solely by the measure of the faith and love with which it is imbued. They discover the vital point of piety and morality not in the visible act, but in the spirit of which the act is the expression; While at the same time they require no self-sequestration inwards, or monkish retreat from the world, but a vigorous infusion of the Christian spirit into all the relations of life. This principle of a truly moral and sound internalism breaks forth in the Reformation upon a large scale. In how far, however, it belonged to the essence, is most evident from the recognition of its importance in all the preparatory rudiments, of that event. It is the centre of all the controversy waged by its precursors against works of righteousness, merit, and supererogation, against indulgence, the *opus operatum*, monachism, vows, and everything of the sort.

After the evangelical principles of faith and internalism, the next in importance of the general characteristics of the Reformation is the principle of Christian liberty. Here it is of great consequence to conceive the idea of liberty according to the sense actually entertained of it by the Reformers, and here, too, the tendency of their precursors casts an important and illustrative light upon the Reformation itself. No doubt the Reformation, as a fact, is a great act of emancipation, and one which also includes a principle of liberty. It is, however, an act and principle, not by any means of liberty in general, but of Christian liberty alone. The liberty for which the Reformers, with equal calmness and determination, contend, is no mere form and abstraction, no unsubstantial and empty shade, which may be twisted on any side for or against religion, and for or against Christianity, but, like all rational liberty, it is a definite and concrete thing, and possesses as its vital content that which the Reformers considered Divine truth, viz., substantial Christianity.

The soil in which their notion of liberty was rooted is the Christian doctrine of grace and faith. According to them true liberty flows from fellowship with God and the appropriation of His grace; for liberty is founded upon love, and love upon faith, and faith is the work of that which is its object, viz., the atoning love or grace of God manifested in Christ. The liberty of the Reformers is thus, on the one hand, the assurance of perfect fellowship with the Divine Being, in which the creature naturally recognises his absolute dependence upon the Creator, as the original fountain of all truth, holiness, and love; while, on the other hand, and for that reason, it is also the consciousness of perfect religious and moral self-sufficiency, and independence of all human things. The autocracy which it confers, the complete exemption from all outward constraint, and arbitrary and factitious ordinances and authority, is in every case based upon theocracy, that is, upon a well-ordered life in God and from God, and included within the bounds of His revelation and law. Were there any doubt, that what the Reformers term freedom is thus really the full, religious and moral independency of the subject of redemption of all created things, and of all those that men pretend to be divine—an independency rooted in vital fellowship with, and submission to, God and his revelations—a lesson upon the point might be learned from their forerunners. It is a point on which there is essential agreement between those who prepared the way and those who completed the work. Among the former the idea of theocratically-Christian liberty is always that of the abolition, not of absolutely all restraints to which man may be subjected, but of those only which sin, the world, law, and human authority attempt to impose upon him in contradiction to the Gospel—an abolition which is perfectly consistent with inward subjection to the Divine ordinances and to the laws of Divine truth and charity. And as they knew no other Christianity, save that which is in itself free, so do they also know no other liberty save that which is Christian and evangelical, and the offspring of vital faith and love. This is another subject on which *Goch* deserves special attention, and on which he has left a particular treatise.

It is, however, a subject on which it is of material importance that we should have clearer and clearer views. In our own

times, and judging from many of the speakers, there is a constant disposition to consider the liberty of the Reformation as an abstract form, to fancy that any imaginable substance may be put into it, and hence to conceive Protestantism as implying a principle of progress absolutely unrestricted, and, it matters not whether, beyond the pale of Christianity or even in determined opposition to it. This is not the place speculatively to discuss such a tenet. It is, however, the very place for protesting, as on conscience, and to the best of our historical knowledge we do, that no such tenet has any foundation upon the idea of liberty, as conceived by the Reformers and their predecessors. It is true, that the Reformation contains essentially the principle of vital progress, of a continual purifying and perfecting alike of practice and of doctrine, of the Church and of science; but then this advance is always to be made upon the foundation of the Gospel. The Reformers could not possibly have had anything else in view, either before or after the great achievement. No doubt the principle of the Reformation is not absolutely connected with its first practical manifestation. A right may be claimed to keep the two to a certain extent apart, and to give to the principle a greater extension than when it was first realized. But then Protestantism, as a principle, ought never to be conceived in a way irreconcilably contradictory to Protestantism as a fact, or so as to make philosophical Protestantism destructive of that of history. At least he who does this has no right to use the words reformation and protestantism, as forms of malediction and enchantment against actual Protestants, while he pretends to apply them to the things to which they are customarily given. The recollection of the idea of liberty, entertained by the Reformers, may, at any rate, conduce to a more distinct and precise discrimination of principles, and if it should happen that the fact which emerges does not please the advocates of a purely formal Protestantism, it is still the duty of history to depict her object simply and fully, leaving the opinion of the day to sort with it as it best can.

As to the view which history takes of the Reformation in general, we may say that in recent times it has become more discerning, comprehensive, free, and objective, than was the case during the period of a greater tension of the antithesis, between Catholicism and Protestantism. In spite, however, of this general advance,

we still find two false notions of the great event extensively prevalent, and which must not be here passed unnoticed. In opposition to the true and unprejudiced historical view, there is on the one side a narrow Protestant, and on the other a no less narrow Catholic one. The correct historical view may, it appears to me, be characterised by the following few traits: It openly and unreservedly owns, first, that Catholicism with its institutions was, under the existing conditions, developed with historical necessity, and that it has been as a whole, and principally for the Middle Ages, as it now is relatively for Modern times, of great consequence and undeniable aptitude: Secondly, that from the very outset of its development, much human imperfection, sin, and narrow-minded unchristianism, penetrated into it, and gradually waxed so powerful, and offered so great an obstruction to the cultivation of the better Christian elements, that an advance beyond it, by means of a return to what was primitive and pure, became likewise a necessity, and after long preparatory steps, at last actually ensued in the Reformation. The two wrong conceptions of the Reformation leave, the one the first, and the other the second, of these particulars disregarded. The narrow Protestant view, occasioned partly by the authors of the Reformation themselves,—but which is by no means justified by their example, inasmuch as however greatly we may admire the zeal with which they fought for life or death, we do not need to take it as a pattern in our study of history,—the narrow Protestant view, we say, overlooks what was natural, and relatively even necessary, in the development of Catholicism, as well as its importance in the history of the world. It beholds in the hierachy mere depravity, in the Mediæval Church mere darkness; while, on the contrary, in the Reformation all is light, liberty and perfection. The former, and all who represent it, it paints in the worst and blackest colours, but can find none too bright and shining to depict the latter. On the other hand, the narrow Catholic view, which originated with the hierarchy, and has been continually advocated by its modern champions, especially in Germany and France, ignores the historical necessity and the deep and general importance of the Reformation —incalculably great though these are even for the regeneration of Catholicism itself. It regards the Mediæval Church in all essentials, as divinely constituted, perfect, and exemplary, and conse-

quently sees in the Reformation only rebellion, apostacy, and sin; and what all evil is, antithesis to the Divinely instituted thesis. The first view, overlooking the fact that it was rooted in the ecclesiastical development of the Mediæval period, and was a gradual growth, leaves the Reformation historically unexplained. The new light, without being kindled by a previous one, appears as pure antagonism to the pre-existent darkness, and flashes, as it were, directly from the clouds. The second view, without considering the inward necessity of the work of the Reformation, and its consonance to a higher plan, leaves the great event unexplained as regards the Divine governance in history. For the fact, that the most noble and deep-souled nations and individuals, they who with greatest earnestness strove after piety and spiritual light, were, and still continue to be, the most deeply involved in this pretended apostacy, is very badly explained by alleging that God permits such a thing to be as long as he sees fit. Besides, if we regard a phenomenon which has given the prevailing bent to all modern intellect as a purely extraneous emergence, a miscalculation introduced by human hand into the Divine government, we must likewise of necessity doubt whether it is correct to look upon history as exemplary at all. Both views, however, history, when impartially handled, refutes. It shows indisputably to the ingenuous eye, and all the more clearly, the more completely the preceding centuries are studied, that in spite of its originality and freshness, the Reformation by no means interrupted the continuity of human affairs—that, on the contrary, it was, on the one hand, preceded and its way prepared, by pious and enlightened men, who preached almost the very doctrines that distinguished the Reformers, while, on the other hand, a very considerable Christian and intellectual culture was possessed by numerous individuals and communities, and generally, that there was a wide circle of susceptible minds which sympathised with the Reformers, and resigned themselves to their influence—all tending to prove that the Church, never wholly forsaken by the spirit of Christ, was reformed by itself from within, to a much greater extent, than by any parties disconnected with its antecedents from without. Nor does impartial history less evidently show, that into the hierarchy and the dominant ecclesiasticism in general, in spite of some mixture of what was relatively good and

estimable, corruptions had crept, and had accumulated to such an extent as to render a thorough transformation, by virtue of a new spirit, one of the most urgent necessities, and that it was only in consequence of the obstinate resistance of these parties to the new and better spirit, that the renovating powers, which had sprung up in the Church's bosom, were forced out of it, and driven off to form a new community.

The fact of the Reformation having pre-existed its actual advent, its origin in the Church's own bosom, and the conditions and importance of that circumstance at least in a certain province, the following work proposes to illustrate in detail. And, inasmuch as I must in justice presume that enlightened Catholics, no less than unprejudiced Protestants, are anxious for historical truth, I count upon having favourable readers even among the brethren of that faith. At any rate, I can quiet my mind as respects them, with the conviction, that however good a Protestant I am, I have never lost sight of the common Christian ground of both churches, or of the special excellencies and merits of theirs. Much more has my motive in writing been pure affection to the cause of Christianity, exempt from anger or zeal, which there was nothing to excite; and although the facts themselves may here and there contain irritating matter, which, as a historian, I could neither mitigate nor veil, still I have never with design adopted such a method of delineation as was calculated to wound the piety of any man when it was sound in character, and built upon conviction.

Just as the Reformation, besides much that is subordinate, ministers mainly to three different branches of study, viz., to that of doctrine, to that of the history of literature in a narrower sense, and to that of ecclesiastical history in a wider; and just as in the lives of the Reformers severally, more is done for one and more for another of these, while none is wholly overlooked, the same happens in the history of their precursors. *Goch* is of greater consequence for the history of doctrine, *Wesel* with his concomitants, for that of the Church, especially as respects its morals and constitution, *Wessel* with his surrounding group, for both, and no less for the history of the sciences. In these men, however, and their subordinates, we generally find something profitable for other than these main ends Along with its

great importance for the developmont of mind in the higher regions, especially of science, the Reformation was also of immeasurable consequence for the moral, the religious, and in general the intellectual life of the people. Nor is even this popular element wanting in the phenomena which paved the way for the Reformation. We discover it particularly in its religious and moral aspect, in the schools of the Mystics, and to a still greater extent, and in combination with a lively zeal for the social improvement, instruction, and training of the people, among the Brethren of the Common lot. Both of these, the Reformatory element in Mysticism, and still more, because still more widely operative, that in the Institute of the Common lot, and in its chief representatives, of whom *Thomas à Kempis* is one, I have been at great pains to depict, and believe that no one has hitherto done it as fully and distinctly.

The contents of the whole work are divided as follows: The first volume deals chiefly with the need of the Reformation in reference to the prevailing corruptions, while the sequel treats of the positive preparations made for it and of its incipient rudiments. The first consists of two books, and so does the second, while each of the four has one or more representative characters as its main theme. In the first book, *John of Goch* shows us the need of the Reformation, as respects the general spirit of the Church inwardly. In the second, *John of Wesel* and several of the members of his circle, show the same thing with reference to special ecclesiastical abuses. The third describes the practical and popular efforts in behalf of the Reformation, made by the Brethren of the Common lot, and by the Dutch and German Mystics. The fourth exhibits in *John Wessel*, the theology prior to the Reformation in its most highly finished form. I have begun with *Goch*, because I was thus necessarily led to treat of the spirit and essence of the Church in general. A calm and self-concentrated character, he lives mainly in contemplation, and furnishes few materials for the Church's external history. This want, however, is amply compensated by his importance as the cultivator of reformatory thoughts and principles. On the other hand, *Wesel* leads us at once into the very midst of the Church's affairs, and side by side with him we have depicted other men who likewise strenuously fought the ecclesiastical battle.

Here too we have introduced a variety of particulars connected with the history of the Universities and the study of theology, which are of some importance in order to a more precise acquaintance with this period of transition. Nor am I without hope that a contribution given in an appendix to the present volume, and intended to illustrate the commencement of the war of the peasantry, will be read with pleasure. I promise myself, however, a much livelier interest for the second volume, partly because the materials are of richer variety, and partly because the persons and subjects treated of are of greater positive importance. The brethren of the Common lot are one of the most pleasing phenomena in the annals of spiritual life. *Gerard Groot* and *Thomas à Kempis* awaken general sympathy by their very names. The German Mystics, in their connection with the Reformation, are of the highest importance,—an importance which has not been hitherto sufficiently estimated,—while the most superficial acquaintance with the theology of *Wessel* suffices to secure for him in a pre-eminent sense, the title of *Luther's* precursor.

It may perhaps be objected to the work, that it connects the whole materials with persons, in place of relating them according to their own natural connection, and so consists of a mere series of biographies. This was occasioned by the circumstance that the work was originally a monography of *Wesel*, and has grown from that to the size in which it now appears. At the same time, it seemed to me a very proper method of depicting the different tendencies of the age, to do it through the medium of persons, because, in this way, many things become more lively and concrete than is possible in any other, however otherwise advantageous. Besides, as the several personages represent different modes of thought, or varieties of the same main mode, they implement each other and furnish a collective picture of the age. The work may perhaps be more justly blamed for an excessive fulness of particular details; and in characterising at least the leading personages, I certainly did aim to be complete, and to omit nothing essential either done by or said respecting them. In this respect many may think I have gone too far, and have thereby weakened the general impression. As the work, however, has been written not merely for general readers, but likewise for consultation by professional men, some indulgence, I hope, will be shown to a

fault which is not without advantages. It may also serve to recommend the work to scholars, that, on several points, I have been able to consult manuscripts and rare books. This was particularly the case in the instances of *Goch*, *John of Wesel*, *Hans Böheim*, the precursor of the peasant war, and even of *Wessel*. To the respected keepers of the libraries of Heidelberg, Carlsruhe, Munich, Darmstadt, Bonn, and Emden, I offer my heartiest thanks for their obliging assistance in this matter.

The men who have been here delineated form a connected group. They are Scriptural and reformatory theologians of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, some of them predominantly practical and mystical, others of a more scientific character. In so far, the volumes constitute a whole. They do not, however, even as regards Germany and the Netherlands, by any means exhaust the subject, which may be called the Characteristics of the pioneers of the Reformation. For that reason I have intentionally entitled them not, "*The* Reformers before the Reformation," but simply, "Reformers before the Reformation." If favourably received, and God vouchsafe to me life, strength, and leisure, I may perhaps attempt a continuation. Meanwhile, may what is here furnished experience a suitable reception, and be productive of good.

The evangelical theology of our day is threatening on two sides to forsake the principles of the Reformers. One party, relinquishing the historical basis, and all that is positive, concrete, and vital in Christianity, have cast themselves wholly into the arms of Idealism, and that generally pantheistic. Another, adhering strictly to the positive, refuse to recognise it in any but a single strictly defined and fixed formula of Christianity, and are destitute of desire for advancement and of the spirit of vital reform. The former repudiate stability, the latter progression, and neither, probably, will take much interest in a work like the present. The Idealists will say that it is over-loaded with the ballast of personal, individual, and subjective matter, and will desiderate "the development of the idea through its phases." The others, cleaving solely to what has been, or now is, will be unwilling to bestow much of their sympathy on that which is about to be, and whose variety has not yet been moulded into formulas. This unfavourable state of theology, however, ought not to prevent us either

from investigating the nature of the Reformation, and depicting it in its entire historical truth, or yet from holding fast its true principle, in the promotion of science. Probably many of our cotemporaries are of opinion that we are now upon the eve of a new reformation, and I will not deny,—who, with the present signs of the time before his eyes, would be bold enough to deny?—that we are living in a period of transition highly critical for the immediate future, and in many of its features strikingly akin to the 15th century. But whether the change that now awaits us be a reformation, and destined to accomplish for our age what that of *Luther* and *Zwingli* did for the 16th century, is a question few will venture to decide. All the reformatory measures we have yet heard of are much too negative and unhistorical, and contain too little to satisfy the deeper cravings of the intelligence and the religious sentiment to merit the name. A reformation is never a mere work of ruin, but involves only as much *de*struction as is unavoidable for *con*struction, and as the elements of the latter, constituting though it does the very heart and essence of the thing, are still wanting, the only course of safety I see, is for every man who can, to cleave with conviction to the principles of the Reformers, and firm in the faith, and free in science, to build upon that ground conformably to the wants of our age.

ULLMANN.

Heidelberg, 18th October 1841.

JOHN OF GOCH

AND

JOHN OF WESEL,

AND

OTHER PROMOTERS OF REFORMATION CONNECTED WITH THEM,

ESPECIALLY

CORNELIUS GRAPHEUS, GREGORY OF HEIMBURG, JACOB OF JÜTERBOCK,

AND

MATTHEW OF CRACOW.

DELINEATED BY

DR C. ULLMANN.

THE TRANSLATION BY THE

REV. ROBERT MENZIES.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

THE NATURE OF THE REFORMATION, AND WHAT LED TO IT.

In undertaking to give an account of several remarkable persons who, in the 15th century, paved the way for the Reformation, we have first of all to explain what the Reformation really was. This is by no means unnecessary, inasmuch as the correct definition of a subject materially influences its historical delineation; and just as little is it superfluous, for the point is one on which a variety of opinions have been circulated, equally erroneous in theory and prejudicial in practice. Nothing is more common—and the remark applies to the friends no less than to the enemies of the Reformation—than to conceive that event as something essentially negative, a mere setting aside of errors and abuses, and of course to infer, that as errors and abuses exist at all times and in all places, it is possible always and anywhere to set a Reformation on foot. Here, then, at the very outset, we observe, that no genuine Reformation can be produced at will, and that what may be so produced has no title to the honourable name. A Reformation in the higher sense of the word is always a great historical result, the issue of a spiritual process, extending through centuries. It is a widely-felt and overpowering necessity, entered into, no doubt, spontaneously by the individual, and carried into effect by eminent leading characters, but which at the same time is essentially based upon a large and comprehensive public spirit, such as cannot possibly be evoked at a given moment, but forms itself slowly and gradually by an inward and irresistible exigency. For such a

lasting process of formation, the one thing needful is a quickening centre—a positive kernel. No mere negative, such for example as doubt, objection, hostility to existing things, is powerful enough to unite the minds of men on a large scale, and keep them for centuries in a state of tension and movement. In the physical or moral world there can be no organic and enduring production except from some vital and prolific seed which virtually contains within it, although in embryo, the life actually developed out of it. Such a seed too is always positive. It first secures a position to itself, and then, in order to make room for its free development, it opposes what is foreign and repels what is obstructive. The same general law we likewise observe in every phenomenon which takes place in the religious domain, and to which the name of Reformation may be rightfully applied. Reformation means formation again, restoration of life. In the idea, however, of a restoration of religious life, three essential elements are involved. In the first place, it is a going back to something already fixed and original; for the Reformation, which must be distinguished from the introduction of Christianity and the first establishment of the Church, aims not at the creation of some wholly new thing, but at the renovation of an already existing institution. Accordingly it always proceeds upon a distinct historical domain, and in overstepping this boundary, looses its character. But then, secondly, it is not merely a return or reference to, a recognition of or longing after, an original. It is much more, an effectual restitution of it, a new and successful introduction into life of that which is ascertained to be genuine; and this mainly constitutes its practical and positive character. It is a great historical act, but one which rests upon a given foundation, clearly known and recognized in the general conscience, and which for that reason becomes in its turn the basis of a further development—a spiritual re-edification. In fine, the nature of a Reformation likewise implies a conflict with what is false, and an abolition of what is antiquated, by which its position is converted into opposition. For if it is to be the renovation of an original, this presupposes that the original has in the course of time been disfigured and adulterated, and that its corruptions require to be put away. The necessity of giving it room enough to assume its new form also implies an effort to combat and abolish what is old and obstructive. But never is a true

Reformation a mere process of destruction. On the contrary it is always a process of construction, effected through only as much destruction as is unavoidable.

These definitions pertain to the nature of all Reformations, and nobody will deny their applicability to the change undergone by the Church in the 16th century. Bearing the name of Reformation in the narrower sense, this event is a deliberate return to primitive Christianity. It moves essentially in that sphere. As far as its knowledge went, and by a series of glorious acts, it restores primitive Christianity to life, and secures for it room and liberty by vigorously and decidedly cutting off all that is alien. In order, however, to its becoming an historical transaction of such a magnitude—a transaction shared by the most enlightened nations of Europe, especially by the earnest, deep-souled, and energetic off-shoots of the German stock, and within these, by all ranks, by princes and nobles, scholars and artists, citizens and peasantry, a transaction forming, as it were, the turning-point of history from the mediaeval to modern times, and the centre of the whole subsequent intellectual progress of the world,—we must suppose it to have had very great antecedents. Like a giant oak, such a phenomenon in the history of the world could not have been produced without deep and wide-spread roots, and a firm ground from which to grow. It betrays a lack of historical insight to attempt to explain it merely by the qualities of the actors or the transitory interests of the age. These no doubt are points which must not be left out of view. At the same time all that is really great, general, and lasting, in history, proceeds from other and deeper grounds. It is not the work of persons. Persons are merely subservient to it, and are great and influential only when, and in as far as, they are so from clear conviction, and with a perfectly decided will.

If a Reformation is to be effected at all, there are three things indispensably necessary. Corruption must really exist in the domain on which it is to take place; the necessity of abolishing that corruption must be felt and recognized; and the rudiments must be prepared of the new and better system to be substituted for the old. The time for actually reforming only arrives when these conditions are implemented, and only at such a time, and not at any optional moment of history, can true Reformers make

their appearance. The reason is, because under no other circumstances can they be thoroughly successful.

That, during several centuries prior to the Reformation of the Church in Germany and Switzerland, the corruption of Christian faith and practice was great and extensive, is a fact which it would occupy a special work to demonstrate. Abundant contributions to such a task will occur in the sequel of our delineation. Here we mean only to give a summary of the most general points. Christianity was vouchsafed to mankind as a new principle of life, a fresh creative spirit, which, in the progress of their historical development, was to pervade and regenerate the nations. Originally it was a purely spiritual thing, a strong and invincible conviction of renewed fellowship with a merciful Father and God, effected by the Saviour, and, as the offspring and product of this conviction, or in other words of this living faith, a life of love and spontaneous morality. If, however, the internal spirit of faith was not to evaporate, but to be maintained with some degree of steadiness among mankind, and to brave the storms of time, it required to have a vessel to contain it, and, as is likewise involved in the nature of living faith, to form for itself a body. The body for the spirit implanted by Christ in mankind is the Church. The Church arose of necessity from the natural tendency of Christianity to unite men in fellowship with each other, and was equally indispensable for the accomplishment of its end as the religion of the world—an end designed and predicted for it, both by its author and by the great Apostle of the Gentiles. It is, however, impossible to conceive a Church without an external substratum—that is, without a definite form of doctrine, worship, and government. Now for all these the Gospel no doubt supplies the principles and rudiments. It does not, however, actually construct them or apply them to particular points; for this was designed to be the spontaneous work of mankind themselves, enlightened and embued by the spirit of Christianity. In carrying it on, the nature of historical development required that, as the elements for the ecclesiastical structure could not be gathered in the air, they should be borrowed in some measure from the existing systems of religious, scientific, and political life, partly among the Jews and partly among the Gentiles. Accordingly the doctrine was evolved under a relative influence, especially of Gentile

culture, and the worship and government were modified by assimilation to the forms of the Jewish commonwealth. This was a natural process, and not liable to objection so long as only analogies were adopted into the several branches of the framework of the Christian society, and so long as the spirit which dwelt in it was of sufficient strength to govern and animate the body thus formed. The time came, however, when that was no longer the case. Owing to the mixture and confusion of Old with New Testament principles, and the preponderance conceded to heathen philosophic culture, heterogeneous things crept in. And when at last Christianity was elevated to the imperial throne, and the mass of the heathen were admitted into the Church, the influx of paganism could not be prevented. The Church obtained a body which was no more really governed by the spirit of the Gospel.

This appeared in the three elements which enter into the Church's life,—viz., doctrine, government, and worship. In the matter of doctrine the influence of Grecian philosophy and of Gentile opinions in general brought it to pass that Christianity, which is a religion, was, in a great measure, transformed into a system of metaphysics and speculation, and the Gospel of redemption through Jesus Christ into a doctrine of self-salvation by works. With respect to the government, by confounding Old and New Testament principles, the primitive idea of the universal spiritual priesthood of Christians was supplanted by the notion of a special order of priests. And finally, as regards the worship,—a subject closely connected with government, inasmuch as the priest must have an actual sacrifice to offer,—the simple heart-affecting rites and love-feasts of the early Christians gave way to that form of the Lord's Supper, which treats it as a constantly renewed sacrifice of the God-man present alike in spirit and in body. The transplantation of Christianity from the domain of religion to that of speculation and metaphysics, accompanied by an indifference to its practical aspect, is first met with in the Eastern Church; but the same tendency, under an accession of new elements, continued long to operate in the scholasticism of the West, and at first with a quickening influence and grand effects. Gradually, however, it stiffened into formulas, and to such an extreme was this carried as necessarily to evoke a powerful opposition, unless

Christianity was to retire altogether from the sphere of life into that of ideas, and from the Church into the school. The conversion of the Gospel of grace into a doctrine of salvation by outward acts meets us most distinctly upon the domain of the Western Church in the shape of Pelagianism. No doubt it was publicly repudiated by the Church, but it still continued to grow rankly both in the East, where it had long before struck its roots, and in the West, where Monachism and Scholasticism came to its aid. It here engendered a multitude of evils, such as the notion of the desert of good works, the doctrine of a treasure of merits, the whole system of indulgences, the various corruptions of Monachism, and in general the mistaken conception of Christianity as a mere preceptive institute, and the change of the Gospel into a code of laws promulgated for all mankind and not solely for the Jews. The rise in the Church of a separate Priestly order, reckoned of itself holy and divine, was derived mainly from the West, and produced inwardly a total change in the spiritual relation of Christians towards God and the Saviour, while the entire Hierarchial and Papal systems, supplanting the original equality of the several Churches, were an external growth from it. In fine, the idea of a sacrifice in the Holy Supper became the central point of that mysterious and splendid ritual which, so long as men retained a living consciousness of its significance, no doubt made a deep and imposing impression upon their minds, but which soon degenerated into an empty form, extruding the worship of the spirit and the heart, and completely forcing into the shade, the doctrine of salvation so essential to Christianity.

Such, to a considerable extent, was the form in which Christianity first arrived among the nations of Germany, and as they had never seen it in any other, they could not possibly recognize its disfigurement. Even that form, too, though but a shell, contained the kernel of the Gospel. Nay, it may even be said that in the rude state of these nations at the time, there was a necessity for their being trained by a Hierarchy, bridled by a law, impressed by a rich and sensuous ritual, and inspired with an awe of heavenly mysteries. Accordingly not only did they continue to cultivate this tendency, but they carried it to the highest perfection. The Hierarchy, the Papacy, Scholasticism, and the whole imaginative worship expanded among them and bore their

fairest blossoms. At the same time, however, a principle essentially discrepant, the principle of spirituality and self-acquaintance, of liberty and independence of mind, was seated in their inmost nature. This principle is closely related to the religion of Christ in its primitive form, and inseparably resides in it, so that it may be said that by their very birth these nations were predestined for Christianity and Christianity for them. It was among them that the Christian spirit was to display its utmost power and fulness; and hence as soon as on the one hand they had ripened to some degree of independence and culture, and as soon as on the other a just conception of primitive truth dawned upon their minds, the necessary result was the rise and progress among them of a reaction against the secularisation of Christianity, its ossification into dogmatism and legality, and its perversion to the purposes of priestly domination. We do not mean to say that in this reaction all Europe did not take part. But at least the heart of it was evidently in Germany, and we may affirm that the German who was most German in his character, took the lead in the great religious and national movement.

Before, however, it reached this stage, a long preparation required to be made, and a historical process carried on, through several centuries. Defects and corruptions in Christianity existed, but they needed also to be known and felt. In such cases, however, conviction is not produced at a single stroke, but comes by degrees and through the operation of various causes. The Church is a very complicated organism. It has an inward as well as an outward part, and comprehends doctrine and life, constitution and worship, in manifold relations to each other. All this no doubt proceeds from, and is determined by a centre, which is the spirit reigning in the Church; and if the spirit be sound, so likewise will be its several manifestations in ecclesiastical life; whereas if the spirit be distempered, the external form of the Church will also be more or less morbid. To penetrate, however, to the Church's inmost centre, and from that point of view, to estimate its manifestations, is competent only to a deep seeing and practised eye. An eye less skilful looks no farther than the outward aspects which the life of the Church presents. Hence we find that the opposition began, in the first instance, with externals, penetrated by degrees more and more inwardly, and only at last

assailed the corruption in the general spirit of the Ecclesiastical body. The part most external and conspicuous is the worship; and, therefore, we first discover single individuals and smaller parties, with well-intentioned but frequently stormy zeal, taking the field against the ever-increasing multitude of ceremonies and ecclesiastical decorations, and the false and excessive value placed upon outward acts of religion, opposing to these the more inward worship of God, the baptism of the Spirit, and the prayer of the heart, and insisting simply upon the experience of the truth and the practice of the duties of Christianity. This was the path pursued, as early as the 11th century, by several minor sects in France and Germany which are usually branded by the Church as Manichæan. We allude in particular to the Petrobrusians and Henricians, who even at that early date had acquired considerable strength. The form of worship then prevailing, however, had its main foundation in the Hierarchical constitution of the Church, and as the Hierarchy was every day becoming more powerful, and assuming a more threatening attitude, opposition to the form of worship necessarily led further to opposition against that dominant order, and the general circumstances of the Church upon which it rested. This movement was especially represented by Arnold of Brescia, by several branches of the Albigenses, and partially in Germany by the *Stedinger*. The Hierarchy, however, was related in other ways to the whole condition of Christian life, for it had risen to an importance, which seemed attainable only during a general lapse from the original end and aim of Christianity. An attempt was accordingly made to bring back Christian life, in all its branches, to its primitive purity, and to the simplicity and dignity of the Apostolic times. Apostolicity in fact became the watchword of the parties dissatisfied with the Church. A special order of Apostolic brethren was instituted; and in particular we see this tendency carried out with a high degree of purity and success by the Waldenses. No sooner, however, was their attention turned in this direction, than men were unavoidably led back to the Holy Scriptures, hitherto kept in the dark, and constrained to recognize their authority as the rule of Christian life. We mark this among the Waldenses, and after them among all who took a deep and serious interest in the cultivation of Christian piety. The resuscitation of the Bible in its

turn led ultimately and necessarily to what constituted the soul of the opposition—viz., denial of the prevailing doctrine. This step, however, translated the opposition out of the popular sphere to which it had hitherto been chiefly confined, and raised it into the higher regions, the domains of Theology and Science; for the study of Scripture, and the cultivation of the doctrine were the subjects to which divines and scholars mainly directed their attention. This accordingly was the way in which such men as Wickliffe, Huss, Jerome of Prague, several of the great French Divines, and the persons with whom we are to be specially occupied, arose. Their common distinction is that from its central spirit and doctrine, as their point of view, they look less at particular blemishes, than at the corrupt state of the Church as a a whole, recognize it as depending not upon external circumstances and specific abuses, but upon the general spirit of the body, to the renovation of which accordingly they direct all theirefforts, and prosecute these with lively zeal, but with equal prudence and thorough knowledge of the subject. Inasmuch, however, as during the course of four centuries, resistance to the ecclesiastical corruption, in all its aspects, had sprung up, and the spirit of opposition now penetrated all classes of society, from the lowest to the highest and most enlightened, while at the same time no serious and effectual reformatory measures appeared to be adopted, but the clergy became every day more and more debased, it necessarily came to pass that the desire for a Reformation grew to a public matter, a popular cause in the fullest sense of the word, that it was taken up and zealously debated in the sight of all Europe, by the great Western Councils, that the Diets of the Empire reverted to it from time to time, and always with increasing urgency, until at last all Europe rang with the cry for an improvement of the Church in both its head and members. The fact is notorious to the whole world, and such a fact must have had good grounds to rest upon. There can be no doubt, that the need for reformation existed, and that it was deeply, permanently, and generally felt. The negative condition therefore indispensable to a reformation was fulfilled.

Still more indispensable, however, was something else of a positive kind, viz., a preparatory basis for what the Reformation was actually to call into existence. The spirit now once more

to be shed forth and universally diffused, required to pre-exist, at least in individuals and smaller circles. The purer conception of the Christian faith, which was to give a new and better form to the Christian life, needed to be initiatively incorporated in certain definite modes, in order that from these the theology of the Reformation might proceed, if not in outward, still in inward historical sequence. Nor was a commencement of this kind lacking. That which is peculiar in the convictions and tendency of the Reformers, although bearing almost universally the impress of originality, and in the highest degree of personal experience, was still not absolutely new. Its radical elements were contained in the improved spirit of the age, and had been highly elaborated by distinguished men. All that they were called upon to do was clearly and convincingly to collect these elements, to connect them with vital faith, as their true and governing centre, to introduce into life what had been previously mere desire and sentiment, and to make the better theology of a few, the basis of the convictions of a vast community.

The principle that *Salvation flows not from man but from God*, may be considered as the ultimate and comprehensive basis of the Reformation; and the main tendency in which all the Reformers are comprised concentrates itself in the endeavour to prostrate human things, however venerable by tradition, or high in the estimation of the Church, before God and Christ, to give the glory to these alone, to separate from Christian faith and practice whatever seems derogatory to the Divine honour and word, and to restore the proper relationship of man and the Church towards God—a relationship either immediate, or formed by Christ, the sole and everlasting high-priest. We find the same tendency likewise among their predecessors, and exhibiting the twofold phase of Christian knowledge and Christian practice, so that even among them the formal as well as the material principle of the Reformation is prominent and conspicuous. The two things which these men made to be more clearly and generally understood were, First, the necessity of appealing to Scripture as the pure Word of God in opposition to all human doctrine and tradition,—of building upon the word rightly expounded, and upon the pattern of the primitive Apostolic Church cordially embraced, all faith and practice—and of

giving to these, both in individuals and the general Church, a purer and a freer mould; and, Secondly, the conviction, pervading all religious thinking and moral effort, that perfect peace and full salvation do not spring from human actions or ecclesiastical works at all, but solely from the grace of God revealed by Jesus Christ, and embraced by living and true faith, —and that the shortest and only safe way to God is, not the Church and the Church's ordinances, mixed as these are with human additions, but Christ, the Saviour and Redeemer, and his Spirit, who alone can make men free, and guide them to all truth and holiness. Such were the radical truths which we find in all the precursors of the Reformation, and they involved everything else. The sequel of the delineation will demonstrate this so fully that it is needless to expatiate further upon it here. We only desire to direct the reader's attention to what is most salient and characteristic in each of the persons we are about to sketch.

The nature of the case implies that the characteristics of the Reformers will likewise be found in their precursors, not indeed in the same fulness, combination and harmony, for in that case they would have been Reformers themselves,—but still, to a certain extent, and in certain main aspects. This, in fact, was what made them the pioneers of the Reformation. If we apply the remark to particular instances, we are supplied with a twofold division. Among the Reformers we find, and in a greater or less degree proportioned to the extent of their influence, a perfect unity and mixture of conviction with action,—of theological thought with ecclesiastical practice. The same thing is also observable relatively in their predecessors, but with this difference, that ecclesiastical action predominated with some, and with others, theological research. The former work with greater power and apparent effect, and their lives possess a higher degree of dramatic interest; the latter are more retired, and move within narrower circles, but their labours are of greater theological consequence. In the struggle with the prevailing domination, the former often manifest a degree of eccentricity; the action of the latter is more spiritual and concentrated. The one class includes Huss, Jerome of Prague, and Savonarola; the other John of Goch, John of Wesel, and John Wessel. It is

of the more quiet pioneers of the Reformation, those who directed their theological labours inwards, that we shall here treat. They belong chiefly to Germany, including therein the Netherlands, and in all respects evince the national character. A further difference, however, may be drawn between the two in the following respect. The Reformers unite the thetical with the antithetical, position and opposition, in beautiful proportion. The same feature is likewise conspicuous in their true precursors, although some of these labour more to establish positive truth, some rather to refute error. The one is the case with John of Goch, the other with John of Wesel. The fullest symmetry of both elements is beheld in John Wessel. In fine we may also trace another difference. It was the authority of a living scriptural theology in opposition to the scholasticism of the previous age which the Reformation was the means of asserting. There were, however, two ways leading to this scriptural theology, one mainly scientific, and another mainly practical, the way of the school, and the way of life. The former was prepared negatively by refuting and displacing scholasticism, and positively by the revived study of the ancient languages and literature, and by the introduction of a theological speculation, not based upon ecclesiastical or scholastic tradition, but upon the purer foundation of Scripture. The other way was paved by the better sort of practical mysticism, and generally by the religious sensibility, fostered by a diligent use of Scripture, and pervading all ranks, particularly the people. In this manner we may classify the precursors of the Reformation, beginning from below, into those that roused and animated the lower orders, such as Gerard Groot, and the Brethren of the Common Lot,—the practical Mystics such as Thomas à Kempis,—the learned philologists such as Agricola, Reuchlin, and Erasmus,—and the theologians properly so-called. These persons, with the exception of the philologians, we shall here delineate, with more or less detail in each case, according to their respective importance for the Reformation. The plan we shall pursue is to comprehend in the first volume John of Goch and John of Wesel, along with the men of their circle. The sequel of the work will be devoted to John Wessel, as the most important in a theological respect, associating with him the Brethren of the Common Lot in whose schools he was trained. The case of John of Goch will

bring under review the need of the Reformation as respects the general spirit and state of the Church, and the principles of the mediæval theology in their practical aspect. That of John of Wesel will exhibit the controversy carried on against the depraved manners of the clergy and the system of indulgences. In John Wessel we behold a portrait of the accomplished Theologian of the age prior to the Reformation. If to these we add the Brethren of the Common Lot, we shall likewise have before us the share contributed by the people on the one hand, and by the practical mystics on the other, in paving the way for the improvement of the Church. The philological pioneers alone would then be wanting to complete the delineation, but these have been so frequently depicted, especially in more recent times, that we may reasonably pass them over, and, accordingly, we commence our narrative with JOHN OF GOCH.

BOOK FIRST.

JOHN OF GOCH,

OR

THE NEED OF THE REFORMATION IN REFERENCE TO THE GENERAL SPIRIT OF THE CHURCH.

Johannes Gocchius, vir singulari eruditione ac suo tempore nulli secundus, libertatis Christianæ propugnator acerrimus, interpres legis Evangelicæ diligentissimus. Hunc nocturnâ versate manu, versate diurnâ.

CORNELIUS GRAPHEUS.

PART FIRST.

THE LIFE OF JOHN OF GOCH,

AND HIS POSITION GENERALLY AS A THEOLOGIAN.

CHAPTER FIRST.

BIOGRAPHICAL PARTICULARS.

To discern the corruption of the ecclesiastical body, the deep roots from which it sprang, and the means proper for its cure, required earnest and feeling men, of decided, enlightened, and concentrated piety, and such in an eminent degree was John of Goch. The whole energy of his mind was directed to divine things; although, unlike practical men in advance of their age, he did not seek to make a direct impression upon the world around him so much as to gratify a taste for calm and abstract contemplation. For this reason there is little to relate of his life. It presents no striking variations, but passed away in devout meditation and theological study, resembling somewhat, in its recluse and holy tenor, that of a Thomas à Kempis. Still it was far from being fruitless and unprofitable either for his own or after times, as will appear from an account of his theology. The few biographical particulars which have been transmitted in records or may be gathered from conjecture are as follows.

John Pupper was born about the commencement of the fifteenth century at the little town of Goch, in the Duchy of

Cleves.[1] He seems himself to have seldom taken the family name of Pupper, but, according to the common usage of the age, is generally styled John *of Goch* from the place of his birth. Of the family from which he sprung we know little, except that it probably was not of high rank. Neither is our positive knowledge respecting his early education much more abundant, and we must have recourse to conjecture to supply the blank. In his writings Goch shews himself to be possessed of no ordinary theological acquirements. He is familiar with Scripture, well read in the Latin ecclesiastical fathers, especially Jerome and Augustine, and versed in the doctrines of the Scholastic Divines, particularly of Thomas Aquinas and his school. At the same time he is singularly correct in defining, and skilful in the logical exposition of his ideas. In the current language of the learned he expresses himself, if not elegantly,[2] yet with propriety, clearness, and distinguished precision. He even attempts etymologies of his own, and in general demonstrates himself as, according to the standard of the age, an accomplished scholar. All this implies a school education. Nor can there be a doubt that Goch did frequent excellent scholastic institutions. The only question is, what these were? Of the seminary to which he owed his earliest

[1] It is true that *Gesner* (Biblioth. belg., p. 712) designates Goch as a Brabanter, *Fabricius* (Biblioth. lat. med. et inf. aet. t. iv. p. 228) as a Belgian, and *Guicciardini* (Description de tous les Pais-bas. Arnh. 1613, p. 214), along with *Gerius* (in the preface to Cave's hist. litt. t., ii., p. 187), as an inhabitant of Mechlin. But the constant appellation of *von Goch*, and the most reliable ancient accounts, indicate the little town of Goch as the place of his nativity. The transference of his birth to Mechlin arose from the circumstance that a great part of his life was spent in that city. In calling him a Belgian, Fabricius means generally an inhabitant of the Netherlands. The town of *Goch* lies in the Duchy, and not far from the town of Cleves, above Gennoch, upon the little river Niers. It belonged at the time of Goch's birth to the Duke of Gelders, but in 1473 was assigned to the house of Cleves, as a compensation for outlays in war. As the citizens refused to swear allegiance, a castle, now in ruins, was built in it. In the years 1599 and 1622, the city was taken by the Spaniards, and in 1625, by the Hollanders. At present it belongs to the Rhine Province of Prussia.

[2] *Grapheus*, otherwise a great admirer of *Goch*, likewise says of him, in his preface: Mirabar, id aetatis hominem tametsi *stilo incultiori*, tantum potuisse. *Walch.* Monim. med. aev. vol. ii. fasc. 1. Praef. p. xiii.

instruction we have no distinct traces. But the conjecture is unavoidable, that it was one of the *Institutions of the Brethren of the Common Lot.* The domiciles and schools of that society were at the time widely scattered over the Netherlands, and the spirit which breathes through Goch's writings corresponds entirely with their tendency and character. Goch himself frequently speaks with affection and reverence of this manner of life (the *vita communis*[1]), although his idea of it is not always restricted to the brotherhoods which bore the name. It would also seem that he enjoyed the friendship of one who was likewise a pupil—but a still more learned and illustrious pupil—of these institutions, viz., *John Wessel,* and there are even vestiges of his having, at a more advanced period of life, belonged for a time to the society. All this, however, furnishes mere probability, and by no means points to any particular place. A higher degree of assent is due to a conjecture respecting the University at which he studied. It was part of the use and wont of the age for all students, especially those of theology, to attend some University, and the scientific character of Goch's theological accomplishments admit in his case no doubt of the fact. It is true we do not find him possessed of a master's degree,[2] which it was usual

[1] *e.g.* Dialog. de quat. erroribus. cap. 22. Walch. Monim. vol. i. fasc. 4, p. 225, sqq. De libertate Christiana. Lib. ii., cap. 52.

[2] This notice is given us, in an apparently quite reliable way, by an anonymous writer, who had set on foot a search in the town of Mechlin for any existing remains of Goch. It is contained in a letter in *Walch* (Moniment. med. æv., vol. i., fasc. 4, praefat. p. xxxiii.), in these terms, Sed ut ad *Gochium* nostrum redeamus, demirari nunquam satis possum, qui fieri potuit, ut unus ille, sic divino lumine illustraretur, tam aereo et indocto seculo, ut solemnium doctorum errores tam audenti pectore confutaret et refelleret, *cum gentilem illam duarum litterarum M. N.* (Magister noster) *adsalutatiunculam scholis non deportasset,* id quod testantur, qui etiamnum vivunt apud Mechlinienses, Gochianae vitae et status probe gnari. The fact that he did not obtain a Master's degree may no doubt be made the ground of an inference that he had never attended any University. It evidently, however, implies the opposite conclusion, for it would scarcely have been mentioned that Goch did not obtain this honour at the University, had the fact been that he never attended one. If that had been the author's meaning, he would have simply said so, without alluding to the acquisition of a Master's degree. As the words stand before us, they rather amount to an indirect proof, that Goch did receive his education at a University—nay, if we urge the use of the plural *scholis,* that he had attended more than

to carry away from those seats of learning. Still it is possible that many quitted them without this honour, and the want of it only appears strange in the instance of so distinguished a man. If, however, Goch did study at a University, there were three at hisoption. For the sake of their proximity he might choose, either the old institution at *Cologne*, then distinguished for several celebrated professors, or the newly established one of *Louvaine*. On the other hand, for the sake of its fame and authority, he might prefer that of *Paris*, to which multitudes of youths and scholars from all European countries still resorted as the mother institute of philosophical and theological study, and the grand theatre of those scientific pursuits, which could not fail to interest a mind like Goch's. Of Cologne, however, there is not in all his writings the slightest notice, not even once the mention of its name. Its flourishing days in fact were already past. On the other hand he does speak of the Universities of Louvaine and Paris, and treats their concerns as if they were well known to him. About Louvaine he mentions a dispute which had been maintained between the theologian Henry von Zomeren, another acquaintance of John Wessel, and the great majority of the members of the University, on the subject of future contingencies.[1] Henry von Zomeren came from Paris to be Canon of the Cathedral and Professor at Louvaine in the year 1460, a date long subsequent to the period of Goch's studies, because in 1451 we find him Superior of the Priory Thabor in Mechlin. Still the notice he takes of the University may indicate a personal acquaintance with it, and his former residence at the place account for his lively interest in its subsequent history. The probability in favour of *Paris*, however, is much greater. In the first place, it was then the usual resort of the great majority of the aspiring youth, especially of the Netherlands. In the second place it is frequently mentioned by Goch, and reference made to special circumstances, of which he seems to have obtained his knowledge on the spot.[2] And lastly, he repeatedly speaks of

one, according to the supposition we have made in the text. This, however, would be too much to suppose, as the plural word may also indicate vaguely a University education in general.

[1] De libertate Christiana. Lib. i. cap. 26.

[2] De libertate Christiana. Lib. i. cap. 17, 18.

John Gerson simply as "the Chancellor,"[1] and without further designation. This circumstance may indeed be explained by the universal celebrity of the great President of the Parisian University. But the most natural account of it seems to be that, during an early residence at Paris, Goch had familiarized himself with the designation of the great theologian, which was the simplest and the most current in the place. It is true he could not have enjoyed the noble Chancellor's instructions, for after the Ecclesiastical Council at Constance, where he played so distinguished a part, Gerson never returned to Paris, having died at Lyons in 1429, and it is very improbable that before the opening of the Council in 1414 Goch had yet visited that city. At the same time much was there said about "the Chancellor" for several decennia after his death, and it was very long before the impression of his doctrine and writings wholly passed away. As for Goch's theological opinions and method, I do not think that they contain any positive indications of his having been educated at Paris. Still less, however, is there anything to lead us to doubt of the fact.

On the field of positive history Goch makes his first appearance in the year 1451, when he founded a Priory of Canonesses in Mechlin. We give to this transaction, as its probable date, the 50th year of his life, or somewhat earlier. Betwixt this date, however, and the period of his studies, a considerable interval must have elapsed. For although in those days it sometimes happened that the course of study was prolonged to an advanced stage of manhood, this was not usually the case, and therefore is not probable in Goch's. How he spent the interval is a subject on which we have no positive information. One John of Goch is mentioned along with Godfrey a Kempis, as head governor of a house of *the Brethren of the Common Lot at Harderwick*,[2] founded in 1448, and it is most natural to suppose that this person was the subject of our narrative, as may be done without occasioning any chronological difficulty. By his own exertions and with the help of Godfrey á Kempis, and Herman von Schurrenburgh,

[1] De liber. Christ. Lib. ii. c. 52 in fine.

[2] *Delprat* die Brüderschaft des gemeinsamen Lebens, übersetzt von *Mohnike*, Leipzig, 1840, s. 58.

Rector of the School, this Institution of the Brethren is said to have attained a high degree of prosperity. We know with greater certainty that about this time Goch received holy orders, and no doubt also exercised the functions of the office. This he probably did at *Sluys*,[1] in Flanders, for that was the place from which he transferred its first inmates to the Priory Tabor which he founded at Mechlin. At all events it is with this Institution that the later period of his life commenced—the period with which we are somewhat better acquainted, and to which also we assign what we reckon of most consequence, the composition of his writings.

In order to understand Goch's position in life, and partly also the tendency of his writings, we must here premise a few observations respecting the place which was the scene of his labours and its ecclesiastical condition.

The town of *Mechlin*,[2] situated in the heart of Brabant, in a fertile plain, watered by the Dyle, grew at an early period from slender commencements to considerable magnitude and importance. It is mentioned in records even under the Carlovingian dynasty, for in the time of Pepin a certain Count Ado figures in it as a Franconian feudatory.[3] At the partition of the kingdom, under Lothario, in 870, the city was allotted to Charles the Bald, and consequently to France. In 915 Charles the Simple resigned it to the Church of Liege, the Bishops of which appointed the Bertholds, lords of Grimberg,[4] to govern it as their Stewards. Under this Ecclesiastical rule it continued for more than 400 years, until, in 1333, Louis of Nevers, the Count of Flanders, purchased it for himself and his posterity for a very great sum. Even so shortly after, however, as in the year 1346, another Count

[1] There are two places of the name of *Sluys*, a smaller one in the southern part of Wallonian Flanders, situate on the Maes, and a more considerable one, remarkable for its strength, in Dutch Flanders (Sluys, Sluis, Schleuss, Slusae, l'Ecluse), in the vicinity of Bruges, and Middleburg. The latter, celebrated in the history of the wars, is the one here meant. The want of a particular designation supposes it to be a well-known place.

[2] The best work on the special history of Mechlin, is Cornel. van *Gestel* Historia sacra et prof. Archiepiscopatus Mechliniensis. Hag. Com. MDCCXXV. fol.

[3] V. Gestel, s. 1 sq.

[4] Ibid. s. 13 sq.

of Flanders parted with it to John 3d, Duke of Brabant.[1] Subsequently, in 1369, Mechlin came by marriage into the hands of Philip the Bold of Burgundy, and continued for some time under the dominion of his family,[2] until by the marriage of Charles' daughter, Mary, to Maximilian, it passed into the possession of the Austro-Spanish house.

As for *the Ecclesiastical state* of this city, the introduction of Christianity into Mechlin is traced back to St Lambert,[3] and after him to St Rumold († 775);[4] to the later of whom, as the chief founder of the Church and the patron saint of Mechlin, was consecrated its beautiful Gothic Cathedral, the building of which was begun about the end of the twelfth century, and completed near the close of the fifteenth. In Ecclesiastical matters the city at first, and undoubtedly after the eleventh century, was subject to the Bishop of Cambray.[5] This connexion existed until 1559, when Pope Paul the 4th elevated Mechlin to an archiepis-

[1] Ibid. s. 17.

[2] Ibid. s. 18 sq.

[3] *St Lambert*, or Landebert, born of noble parents at Mæstricht, and Bishop of that town, is said to have done much for the spread of Christianity in these quarters, partly in connection with Willibrod, and to have suffered martyrdom on the 17th Sept. 708 or 709. He was venerated as Patron-Saint of Liege. His life was written by Gottschalk, Deacon of Liege in Mabill. Annal. Ord. Ben. Sec. 3; also in Canis. Lect. antiq. T. ii. pars i. p. 135; Hist. Lit. de la Fr. T. iv. p. 58; Acta SS. T. V. Sept. p. 518; Gallia Christ. Nov. T. iii. p. 827.

[4] The holy *Rumold* was either a Scotchman (Chronicon. Cameracense, Apud Maslinas quoque Monasterium est canonicorum, ubi quiescit preciosus Martyr Rumoldus, genere *Scotus*, qui vitam heremiticam ducens inibi martyrisatus est), or as is maintained with greater probability (v. Joh. Sollerii Acta S. Rumoldi. Antw. 1718 fol.), an Anglo-Saxon, and, according to some accounts, of noble birth. At an early age he retired from the world, and led a solitary and ascetic life. Following the impulse which in those days conducted not a few men of piety among the Anglo-Saxons, to the kindred races beyond the sea, he went as missionary into Lower Germany, took a share in the labours of Willibrod, was consecrated a Bishop, but without a fixed See, and is said to have been murdered, upon the 24th of June 775, by two men, whose anger he had provoked by the boldness of his reproofs. Comp. besides the principal work of Sollier cited above, particularly the Hist. littér. de la France, t. ix. p. 338; Gallia Christ. nova, t. v. p. 9; Acta Sanctor. Jul. t. i. p. 169; Butler Leben der Väter und Märtyrer, deutsche Übers. B. 9, s. 15.

[5] Van. Gestel s. 24.

copal see, with a very extensive jurisdiction. The roll of its Archbishops commences with Anthony Perrenot, afterwards the far celebrated Cardinal Granvella.[1]

Even, however, before it became the seat of an archbishopric, Mechlin was always abundantly stocked with clergy and monks. These indeed were not likely to be wanting in a place which for 400 years had continued under the sway of the crosier. In the catalogue of the provosts of the mother Church of St Rumold, we find members of the most distinguished families of the place,[2] under whom a numerous body of deacons and clergy exercised their functions. But other Churches also flourished in Mechlin, and many of the rural congregations in the vicinity[3] were in Ecclesiastical connexion with the town. Besides, there were numerous monasteries and Religious Societies, both male and female; and inasmuch as Goch added to their number, we shall here present a view of these, which will at the same time serve as a contribution to the characteristics of the age.

Till the end of the 15th century, the monastic Institutions[4] at Mechlin included a commandery of the Teutonic order occupying since 1198, the Pitzenburgh House—a monastery of Minorites dating from 1231—of Carmelites from 1303 (after establishing themselves in the city in 1254)—of Hermits of the order of St Augustine from 1305—of Alexians from the same date with a Fraternity of the Brethren of the Common Lot, founded in 1490, and in the 16th century transformed by Archbishop Matthew Hovius into an Archiepiscopal Seminary.[5] Not less numerous were the female communities. Up to the close of the 15th century we may enumerate the following[6]; the Priory of Lillydale (Liliendale, *Prepositura vallis liliorum)*, the principal and wealthiest of the female convents, belonging to the Praemonstratensian order, founded about the year 1251, and subsequently enriched by liberal

[1] See respecting him and the Archbishops, his successors, Van Gestel, p. 49—66.

[2] The ancient Provosts of St Rumold are enumerated by Van Gestel, p. 40, the Deacons, p. 21.

[3] They are mentioned by Van Gestel s. 86—131.

[4] There is a catalogue of the Monasteries for males in Mechlin, in Van Gestel, p. 71—71.

[5] Van Gestel, p. 79.

[6] Van Gestel, p. 79—86.

donations and extensive estates; the monastery of Mount Sion (*Laeti Mons*, Blydenberg) occupied by Victorine Nuns, who, as was alleged, almost as early as the introduction of Christianity into the country, had established themselves here, and lived at first under the rule of St Augustine, but afterwards adopted that of St Victor; the Priory Bethania, a Society of Canonesses of the order of St Augustine, belonging to the Chapter of Windesem, and founded in 1421, and the Priory of Muysen for Cistercien Nuns in 1380. Besides these regular monasteries an important place was occupied by certain female associations possessing less of the monastic character, and devoted chiefly to practical and benevolent objects. Associations of this description, as is well known, took their rise in great numbers from the peculiar character and special necessities of the middle age, and performed the same duties which in our day fall to the share of hospitals, infirmaries, and all the varieties of benevolent male and female societies. Among the institutions of this sort, Mechlin could boast of a very extensive establishment of Beguines founded about the year 1249, without the city walls, and which gradually grew to be a little walled town of itself;[1] of a lazaretto (Sieckelieden, *Virgines leprosae*) introduced as it appears about 1209, in consequence of the intercourse with the East at the time of the Crusades; of an Institution of Nuns of the hospital of St Mary, for attending the sick poor, and which originated about the beginning of the 13th century; and of an establishment of the Black Sisters (*Sorores nigrae*) so called from their dark dress, who followed the Augustinian rule, and were appointed to the care of infectious patients about 1465.

Taken together these facts force upon us the conclusion that old *Mechlin* was in the full sense of the word a *monkish city*, and even pre-eminent among the places which, during the middle ages, abounded in monastic institutions.[2] They also explain how

[1] At first the Beguines lived in a street called by their name. Subsequently they built for themselves without the city, Curiam, officinas et habitacula, tanto successu, ut habitatio earum nonnullis certaret cum oppidulis, muroque includeretur lateritio, et numerus earum esset *aliquot millium*. Van Gestel. p. 79.

[2] There can be no doubt that this was a reason for Pope Nicholas V., in 1450—the year before Goch founded his convent—granting to the city of Mechlin a jubilee, and calling it the "blessed."

the monastic life, with its obligations and fundamental principles, came to furnish Goch with so highly important a subject of reflection and authorship. Living as he did in a world of Monks, his mind was constantly turned by the force of circumstances to the consideration of monachism. He was himself, however, connected with it by a double tie. On the one hand he did something to promote its spread in as far as it was for the time suitable to the wants and progress of the age, and for that reason, advantageous. While, on the other, a deep spirit of free evangelical and fervent piety enabled him perfectly to estimate its real worth, and in the most vigorous and decided way, to resist the false estimate in which it was held, and the abuses it had contracted. He lent a hand to its extension, and was the founder of a Monastic institution, viz., the Priory Tabor. On this subject we have the following notice in the history of the Archbishopric of Mechlin.[1] "The Priory of the Canonesses of St Augustine called *Tubor* took its origin in 1451. It was founded by *John Pupper*, a priest from the town of Goch in Cleves, for the accommodation of eight females desirous to devote themselves to the service of God. For this purpose he purchased the Wilderenhaus,[2] as it was then called, not far from the city walls, where these ladies were to lead a pious life, to the honour of the Holy Saviour on Mount Tabor, and according to the rule of St Augustine. But this Monastery having been destroyed and burned in the troubles of the Netherlands, they purchased another house in 1567, which stood within the walls, and which they still occupy. It is true that from it also they were expelled in 1580, but returning, after an absence of six years, they adapted their habitation more perfectly to monastic purposes than it had been before. These ladies, like the Victorines of Zion (Blydenbergh) are under the government of an Ordinary. Among several distinguished men who have held the office of Rector was Dr Simon Verepaeus, who acquired great reputation by his writings. During the troubles of the Netherlands, he was expelled by the Calvinists; but the town of Herzogenbusch, which remained faithful to its Catholic Prince and the orthodox religion, gave

[1] Van Gestel p. 81.
[2] Praetorium Wilderense.

him a hospitable reception, and honoured him with a canonry in the Cathedral of St John, of which he retained possession until his death in 1598." With this we have to connect the account of Foppens[1] to the effect that John of Goch translated the first Nuns from the house of St Mary Magdalen, at Sluys in Flanders, to Mechlin, and that under his zealous superintendence the new society greatly prospered, so that in a short time its members increased to the number of sixty. Both accounts show the high position and importance of the institution founded by Goch, and the zeal with which he cherished it. His attachment, however, to a particular convent did not prevent him from forming clear views upon the whole subject of monachism, and as in almost all his writings he more or less reverts to it, we shall have ample opportunity of stating the enlarged and profound opinions he was led to form on one of the most important features of that age.

Goch occupied the office of Rector or Confessor to the Nuns at Tabor for twenty-four years. He died upon the 28th of March 1475, and consequently fourteen years before the death of Wessel. His remains were interred in the old Church of the Monastery Tabor, which was then still standing without the walls of Mechlin. Some scholars, especially Conrad Gesner,[2] affirm that he survived Wessel, and was alive in 1490. This statement, however, when weighed with others more precise,[3] has little probability.

From the meagre information we possess respecting the *life* of Goch, it would be difficult to draw any satisfactory sketch of his character. All the more vividly, however, does his *spiritual image* present itself to our view in his *writings*, and the following appear to be its leading features. Goch was a man of great sensibility, with an intellect equally profound and acute, of glowing piety, and a very subtile power of argumentation. With insight to comprehend the phenomena of ecclesiastical life in their root, he combined a keen and correct judgment in ordinary matters.

[1] Joh. Franc. *Foppens* Biblioth. Belg. Brux. MDCCXXXIX. Tom. ii. p. 714 et 715.

[2] See Walch Moniment. med. aev. vol. i. fasc. 4, Praef. p. xviii.

[3] This is especially remarked by a very credible witness, *Grapheus*, in the preface to one of Goch's writings. *S. Walch* Monim. Med. aev. vol. ii. fasc. i. Praef. p. xiv., and vol. i. fasc. 4, p. xviii. xix. Praef.

The natural bent of his mind disposed him to solitary contemplation, and to his connexion with Nuns was probably due the gentle and sensitive caste of his character. But, at the same time, by the bold and unreserved utterance of the results of his reflection, he made a deep and salutary impression upon the external world. His chief aim was to satisfy his religious and spiritual wants by positive perceptions of truth, and yet, when in the course of his enquiries, he encountered any prevalent error, never did he fail to denounce it clearly and distinctly and with all the earnestness and zeal of love. Less learned and comprehensive than his friend *Wessel*, and with less also of the activity and spirit of a Reformer, he yet on the other hand had greater depth of intellect and sentiment, and was more thoroughly imbued with the nobler species of Mysticism. Compared on the contrary with *Thomas à Kempis* and men of his stamp, he united with less of the mystical element a larger measure of logical and scientific accomplishment, a more luminous and penetrating mind, and was in general greater as a theologian, and more decided and zealous for an immediate reform of the religious and ecclesiastical life.

Of all this the reader will be convinced when we have described, as we now proceed to do, Goch's position as a theologian in general.

CHAPTER SECOND.

GOCH'S GENERAL POSITION AS A THEOLOGIAN.

As it is the chief office of Biography to depict some historical character, and to show both what he was in himself and what in relation to the age in which he lived, and as the internal life of a great theologian involves a multiplicity of bearings, it appears necessary for a right appreciation of the *position of Goch*, and of other congenial men, to premise some general observations. These we shall extend to some length, and all the more because they will at the same time describe the general position *of the Reformatory theology of the fifteenth century.*

To begin with the most general of all views, *John of Goch is a theologian of the Western School.* At a very early period Christian theology had developed itself in particular ways, determined by the deversities of national character and other co-operating circumstances. In the East, and especially among the Greeks, the theoretic and speculative parts of the doctrine, such as the articles relating to the being and attributes of God, and to the person of Christ, had been chiefly cultivated; whereas, among the Westerns, the practical doctrines which immediately influence life, and which relate to sin and grace, redemption and sanctification, had received the largest share of attention. This peculiar bent was given to the theology of the West as early as the days of *Tertullian*, the first of the Fathers who wrote in Latin; but it was afterwards far more deeply and permanently impressed upon it by *Augustine.* Tertullian had, at the same time, assumed a hostile and repulsive attitude to philosophy, which was also followed by his immediate successors Augustine, on the contrary, having himself received the education of a philosopher and logician, sought to satisfy the demands of speculation. It was his aim (and to this he owes his scientific importance) to reconcile faith with knowledge and authority with philosophic enquiry, always however in subservience to the interests of practical religion and the creed of the Church. His theology became the ground work of the whole development of the middle

ages. The principle he laid down, that faith necessarily precedes reasoning, and that reasoning is as necessarily the offspring of faith, was the initial basis of the most important forms which scholasticism assumed. The middle ages, however, subsequently received new theological impulses, and in particular were powerfully influenced by the *Aristotelian philosophy*, in consequence of which the love of *theory* and *speculation* re-appeared with increased vigour. Indeed after Aristotelianism, which itself gave an undue preponderance to theory, had supplanted Platonism,—a system more comprehensive and more akin to the spirit of Christianity,—so predominant did theory become in *Scholasticism*, as materially to impair the practical aspect of Christian truth. A reaction could not but ensue. The *practical character* peculiar to the religion of Christ, inherent in the Western theology from its birth, and which had been so deeply impressed upon it by its chief representatives, could not but again vigorously assert its rights by assuming a hostile position towards the too exclusively theoretical scholasticism. The movement which thus arose embraces all the men who helped to pave the way for the Reformation, and among others the subject of this memoir, in whom its connexion with the Scriptural and Augustinian character of his theology can scarcely be mistaken.

Goch, however, does not merely belong to the theology of the West. His connexion is still closer with that of the middle ages, and with the *mediæval theology in its transition to the Reformation*; and in order to assign to him his exact place, it is requisite to refer to this latter theology, and ascertain what it was, and what the forms which it assumed. Its essential character will be found in the fact, that while based upon ecclesiastical tradition, it is not content barely to accept its data, without inwardly vivifying and subjecting them to the understanding. There were, however, two ways of inwardly appropriating and quickening the materials which tradition supplied: It might be done either in the heart, with the organ of faith and love, or it might be done in the intellect, by an analysis of the ideas, with the organ of ratiocination. Hence arose the two main tendencies of the Mediæval period, *Mysticism* and *Scholasticism*. No sooner, however, had these separated from each other as antagonistic contraries, than an endeavour to reconcile them could not but

ensue, and by means of the Victorines, a tendency arose once more consonant with the Augustinian principles, and which, setting out with faith and love as its roots, proceeded to speculation, and treated even Mysticism theoretically and systematically. Both tendencies were equally the offspring of an essential exigency, and both were also of unquestionable benefit to the general economy. *Mysticism*, principally fostered by the branches of the Germanic stock, preserved among the nations the Christian spirit in its fulness of life and practical efficacy: *Scholasticism*, belonging more to the Romanic tribes, devoted its chief attention to the formal elaboration of Christian ideas, and the exercise of argument in the schools; and are conciliation betwixt them was indispensable, unless two things essentially related, and each necessary as a complement to the other, were to be wholly dissevered. Scholasticism, however, whose genius was despotic, showed itself in the sequel, least susceptible of counteraction on the part of Mysticism and other vital impulses: In the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, it became more and more exclusively theoretical and pedantic, wedded to formalism and subtilties, and useless for life. On the other hand, Mysticism raised its head especially in Germany and the Netherlands. It contained a more vigorous germ of vitality, assumed a more simple, popular, and practical character, and increasingly appropriated the new and important element of Scripturalism. Allying itself with the freshly emerging love of the Bible, it had the chief hand in effecting the transition to the Reformation, whereas Scholasticism, as a thing essentially antiquated, was assailed and driven from the field. In order, however, successfully to vanquish it, it was to a certain extent necessary to fight Scholasticism with its own weapons, and thus it also directly contributed an element for the further cultivation of theology, viz., Logic. Such generally is the position in which we find the theology of the scientific precursors of the Reformation, and into the constituent elements which we have just stated, the theology of Goch may also be resolved. We may designate it as a theology of love, for love is the true fundamental principle from which all else in it flows, and with which all else is connected; and in so far it is related to the higher species of Mysticism. It is a theology too of living faith in Scripture, for to that, as the

ruling authority, Goch in every case refers, and in so far he too claims a share in the introduction of the Reformation. It is, however, likewise, a theology of reflection, for he endeavours to develop and establish logically the statements of the Bible, and in that respect, is still rooted in Scholasticism, although he strenuously impugns it as defective in the two former particulars. The Scholastic element of his theology Goch probably derived from his early education at the University: The Mystical, seems to have been innate, but may also have been fostered by his recluse life and intercourse with nuns; and it is probable that the Scriptural was developed by his connexion with *Wessel*, although a general bent in that direction was one of the features of the age. The two latter elements, however, must be regarded as the most essential. The first manifests its influence only in his style and method of treating his subjects. In general his plan is, when positively expounding a doctrine, first to state the idea, then to prove and demonstrate it to be scriptural, and then, to dissect it logically, and on scriptural grounds exhibit its spiritual import. Whereas, in refutation, he first states clearly the false doctrine, then confronts with it the true one which he expresses in Scripture texts, and finally endeavours to enforce by scientific arguments.

Proceeding further we meet with two other points. In the first place, *Goch's theology is biblical*, and, therefore, in some respects *anti-philosophic*. In the second place, it is substantially *Augustinian* and therefore decidedly *Antipelagian*. At the same time, however, as Pelagianism had entwined itself closely with Scholasticism, it is in respect of doctrinal matter also *anti-scholastic*.

As regards the first of these points, Goch in all his writings declares his positive *biblical tendency*, and to this we shall have occasion frequently and more fully to recur. At present and in a prefatory way, we shall only point to a few statements. Even the fundamental conception, which he forms of the true spiritual liberty of the Christian, and the leading principle of his theology, that whatever is salutary and good emanates from God alone, essentially imply that he derives the higher knowledge of truth from the same exalted source, viz., the Spirit and the revelation of God, and, on the other hand, that he contemns all human authority.

In his highest concerns man ought to be independent of his fellow-men, and dependent upon God alone. In God are to be found supremacy, liberty, all-sufficiency, and perfection. He needs no superior from whom to derive what he does not possess, and, consequently, no instruction. Instruction, however, especially in Divine things, is of indispensable necessity to man, and as conformity to God is the end of his being, it follows, that he is the most perfect man, who wholly resigns himself to the guidance of the Divine Master,[1] and requires no human master or teacher. All certain, pure, and authoritative instruction in Divine truth, according to Goch's conviction, emanates from the revelation of God in Christ and from that alone, and is stored in the Holy Scriptures, which are therefore styled canonical. Every other doctrine on supernatural things, however high and distinguished the author may be, is valuable and important only if it be, and in so far as it is, consonant with Scripture. To the truth of the Canonical Scriptures, so far as the Lord shall open up to him their meaning, Goch avers his determination to adhere, and then proceeds,[2]—"Let others be full of their own opinions, and by logical inferences mould the truth to suit their fancy. For me I have no desire but to rescue it, in its nakedness and simplicity, from the darkness of philosophic reasonings, and present it in a form adapted to the comprehension and taste of the simple. Let others excel in the science of oratory: With me the highest philosophy is to know how to act,[3] for it is not the teachers of the law, but the doers of it, that shall be justified." He likewise practically shews that his stand is upon the Bible by the fact, that in all his expositions of doctrine, he starts with Scripture, and only on the basis of texts thoroughly understood, endeavours to discern the intrinsic truth of the matter in hand. He applies the same rule in judging of heresy in general, for he says that "It consists in obstinate adherence to an opinion, contradictory to canonical truth, as that is simply and clearly expressed in Sacred Scripture,"[4] and he applies it likewise in opposing the

[1] Dialog. de quatuor erroribus. cap. 22. p. 237.

[2] Dialog. de quatt. err. cap. 10. p. 131.

[3] . . . abundent alii in scientia *dicendorum*, nobis sit summa philosophia habere scientiam *fiendorum*.

[4] Dialog. de quatt. err. cap. 22. p. 227.

various tendencies of the age which he deemed unchristian. In every case he appeals to the standard of Scripture.

The necessary reverse, however, of such a positive Scriptural tendency was *an antagonistic attitude to philosophy*, especially to the reigning philosophy of the times. This is a point the special consideration of which, in all its bearings, is indispensable in order to form a just estimate of Goch, and the men of kindred spirit, and even of the Reformers. In consequence of the conflict they waged with philosophy, especially Aristotelianism, the precursors of the Reformation, and, still more, some of the Reformers themselves, might seem to us to have been unenlightened and blind zealots, destitute of all historical equity, were we not duly to consider their peculiar circumstances and essential vocation. Every great advance of mankind includes an opposition to things as they have previously existed and been received, and consequently bears in its bosom an element of hostility, which must be singly and resolutely carried out, if a new path is to be opened at all. At the same time this inevitably prevents full justice being done to existing things, and begets a severe and exclusive mode of thinking. In this way, not merely in our judgments of history, but even in the domain of practice, there may be what is relatively a retrograde movement, in order that, on a large and general scale, an advance all the more considerable may be possible. Let me remind the reader of a very remarkable example in Ecclesiastical History. We, who stand upon the ruins of the religions of antiquity, and contemplate them in the mirrors of history, never entertain a doubt that piety and the consciousness of a Divine Being existed among the Heathen, and that even their myths contain much that is beautiful, good, and true. The case however, was, widely different during the deadly combat which early Christianity had to maintain with Paganism, then no doubt inwardly enfeebled with age, but still spreading its roots far and wide, and wielding outwardly a great amount of power. That was not, therefore, the time historically to weigh, or calmly to estimate, its merits, but to fight with it; and, at such a time, we must consider as not merely pardonable but proper, the conduct of the champions of Christianity in principally if not exclusively exposing to view all that was false, absurd, morally pernicious, and devilish in a system, then for the most part degraded. The

same is the case here; and as we never think of denying the greatness of Aristotle or the importance of his labours, and far less of blaming him, because he was not a Christian, just as little do we deny that the blending of the Aristotelian logic with the Christian faith contributed greatly to the systematic elaboration of its doctrine, as well as to the discipline of the intellect in the middle ages. That, however, which seems easy and natural to us who now look back upon vanquished Scholasticism, must to those who had Scholasticism still to vanquish, have appeared unreasonable and impossible. The thing which then required to be done was to remove the corruptions which had sprung from the false connexion of theology with philosophy, and this was only practicable by sharp and decided controversy. Just as little can these corruptions be denied. The matter only requires to be viewed in its right connexion, and the difference of times to be weighed. *Scholasticism* was an indispensable link in the development of the European nations. It served as a means of effecting the transition from a merely positive way of apprehending the doctrine of Christianity to that scientific liberty and independence which the Reformation introduced. In this important interval it called into being certain vast productions, and, so long as the want of free *subjectivity* was but feebly felt, no doubt to a certain extent it satisfied the mind. It is, however, a scientific phenomenon which extends over a period of not less than four centuries, and consequently passed through various phases of development. At its commencement in the eleventh century, under Anselm of Canterbury, it was very different from what it finally became at the end of the fifteenth, under Gabriel Biel. Originally it was a real step in advance, as compared with that positive theology which merely collected texts, being instinct with spirit and intellect, deeply embued with sentiment, and inflamed with the fresh ardour of scientific improvement. At its culminating point, it was comprehensive, rich in matter, widely ramified, and, like a Gothic edifice, carefully elaborated in every part. But being more and more controlled by extraneous powers,—in respect of its matter, by the hierarchy, and in respect of its form, by Aristotelianism,—it too, in its last stage, became a mere external tradition, a cunning and spiritless formalism, incapable of satisfying the deeper wants of the enquiring intellect or of vital Christian feeling, and an obstruction

to the progress of true enlightenment. From the meshes of a system so over-complicated and artificial, and from a theology which had gradually degenerated into an empty form, unprofitable and untrue, the mind required to escape, and concentrating itself within, to seek in the simple and really quickening truths of primitive Christianity that refreshment, purity, and vigour which were necessary for new productions. It required to return once more to the Gospel, and draw supplies from its inmost heart, in order to shed them with new and living power from itself. Nor ought it, moreover, to be forgotten that in Scholasticism, especially under the form which it assumed in the course of the fifteenth century, there was an intrinsic principle of dissolution. The union of Christianity with Aristotelianism was a marriage which could not last. A philosophy predominantly empirical in its character, cognizable by reason alone, and in some degree sceptical,—a philosophy which decidedly prefers theory to practice, treats Divine things merely as objects of analytical reflection, and neither teaches a Divine providence over human affairs, nor thinks so highly of the human soul, as to deem it worthy of enjoying true communion with God and an everlasting existence—a philosophy which had been reared upon the soil of totally different religious and moral views of the world, could never permanently blend with a religion which, on the contrary, is thoroughly ideal, and full of the inspiration of faith, which has an essentially ethical character and aim, which contains inalienable mystical elements, and looks upon living fellowship with God and the sure prospect of eternal life as her most precious jewels. Any contract between two such spiritual powers could not but lead to the inevitable consequence that in the course of their development, either the philosophy would rob the religion of its peculiarities and wholly absorb it, or that the religion would repudiate and break all connexion with the philosophy. For Christianity, which was still as a whole and within its own domain of Christendom, pervaded by faith, to have been consumed by Aristotelianism, was, considering its intrinsic force of truth and life, an impossibility. The latter alternative therefore alone remained, and could not but take place, whenever, as was the case in the course of the fifteenth century, the discrepancy between the two became a distinct object of consciousness.

Finally, we have to consider *the actual aspect which philosophy*

at that time at least partially presented. Things emerged which were calculated to inspire any man, not to say any Christian, of the least earnestness and piety, with a complete disrelish for it. John of Goch himself relates a remarkable example of the use which *the young France*, or—when we consider the body of students in Paris as an assemblage from all countries—*the young Europe* of those days, made of philosophy, as a cloak under which to propound the most licentious and immoral principles. In the year 1376, the philosophical students in Paris, proceeding on the principle, as false as it is pernicious in its manifold applications, that there is a double truth, one philosophical and another theological, and that a proposition may be true in philosophy which is false in theology, propounded a list of theses, for which they justly incurred the animadversion of the Archbishop of the city, who was also officially superintendent of the University. Besides denying the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection, and asserting the eternity of the world, and the influence of the stars upon human affairs, these theses contained the following strange doctrines: The will of man is necessarily determined by his knowledge, as is the appetite of the brute. There cannot possibly be such a thing as sin in the higher powers of the soul; Man sins from the influence of his passions, not of his will. Salvation belongs to the present life and to no other. There are no other kinds of virtue but the acquired and the innate. Continence is not essentially a virtue. Simple fornication, considered as the connexion of a male with a female, and voluntary on the part of both, is no sin. There are fables and falsehoods in the Gospels as in other books. It is useless to pray, because whatever happens, happens necessarily, and cannot be changed. Of such articles as these the young philosophers had propounded 219. From the existing records on the subject and the letter of the Bishop, Goch selects mere specimens, from which, however, it is easy to infer the spirit of the whole.[1]

Viewing all this conjointly, it is impossible to deny, that philosophy, in the form which it then wore, and philosophic theology, were greatly corrupted. And let it not be said, that the proper way

[1] There is a long accouut of the affair in Goch's work De libertate christiana Lib. i. cap. 17 and 18.

was at once to have substituted a better philosophy, in the room of that whose imperfections were now seen. Such a requirement betrays a total ignorance of history. In the first place, the ground required to be cleared, and an open field secured for the Christian faith and its scientific development. Only upon such a fresh soil could a speculative philosophy of a peculiarly Christian character spring and grow. This, however, was not even the task of the Reformers, to say nothing of their forerunners, but was reserved to a much later period. The task appointed for them was to give battle to the corrupt philosophy of the age, and making no capitulation with it, sternly and resolutely to resist the current opinions. We would do them the highest injustice, however, were we to allege that on that account they were opposed to freedom of thought, scientific enquiry, or an experimental and living apprehension of the Christian doctrines. In fact, if the word philosophy be understood in its more general sense, they were but relatively anti-philosophic. So far from being so absolutely, we find Goch and Wessel, who was of a congenial mind, frequently expatiating in the field of speculation. In their hands, however, speculation is a free and independent exercise of thought based exclusively upon Scripture, and hence essentially theological. It is free from the excrescences, traditions, and dead formalism of the Schoolmen, and resembles the better theological method of the early founders of Scholasticism, and the more distinguished Fathers of the Church.

What remains for us to contemplate in the theology of Goch is its *Augustinian* and *Antipelagian* elements, and these demand attention all the more as substantially determining its content. Pelagianism, although originating in a well-intentioned regard to morals, was a view of Christianity which, by representing the natural man as morally pure, and all-sufficient for himself, grace and redemption as subordinate means of virtue, and Christ as a mere teacher and pattern, essentially altered its character. This involved, on the one hand, an almost insuperable impediment to the appropriation of the true spirit of the Gospel, while, on the other, it supplied a foundation for a false method of treating Christianity, as if it were a mere moral *law*, a new although higher species of *Judaism*. The necessary consequence was, that it originated many other corruptions similar to those which pre-

vailed among the Jews, before the introduction of Christianity, and after that event among many Jewish Christians, and which are so strenuously impugned by the Apostle Paul. In this way the mediæval church had lapsed into a state of mere legalism, and thence, as could not but happen, into a pursuit of righteousness by works, with all its natural fruits; so that there was an absolute necessity for some powerful counteracting force, in order to bring it back once more to the spirit of the Gospel, and the principles of saving grace and faith. Such a counteracting force required of course to be reared upon the doctrine of *Paul* as its main basis, and, inasmuch as Augustine was not only in other respects the most eminent and revered of the Western Fathers of the Church, but was likewise the most determined advocate of the principles of the great Apostle, and the keenest opponent of Pelagianism, it necessarily enlisted under his banner, and took advantage of his mighty intellect, forcible language, and universally recognized authority, against the prevailing errors and corruptions. This is the tendency which we find comprehending not only the Reformers, but all who helped to pave their way, and among these, the subject of our narrative. Without neglecting Christ's own sayings in the Gospels, and the works of the other Apostles, especially John, the writings of Paul, and, above all, the weighty passages in the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, form the mainstays upon which Goch rests his theological disquisitions. In all his writings he appears imbued with the spirit of the Apostle of the Gentiles, and deeply and vitally smitten with a relish for his doctrine of justification through faith, working by love. And although, among the Fathers of the Church, in whose ranks he takes his place, he mentions several others, such as Jerome, Gregory the Great, and in ecclesiastical matters, the Chancellor Gerson, still Augustine is the one to whom above all, after proving his point from Scripture, he continually recurs, the one whose language he most frequently cites, for the enforcement or distinct expression of his own opinion, and whose whole mind he seems most to have appropriated.

Both of these, the Pauline and the Augustinian elements, will appear in the theology of Goch if we give a short outline *of his leading views*. The whole substance of his theology may be condensed into the words *Of God, through God, to God*. God is the

fountain alike of all being, and of all well-being. Deriving as he does his existence from God, the chief end of man is fellowship with God by spontaneous love. This end, however, especially now that man is a sinner, can be attained only through God, and in the use of those means which His grace and spirit supply, so that, the life of man here on earth, no less than the higher stage of its evolution, and the blessedness in which that is to terminate, are essentially a Divine work and gift. All that meets our observation in man, is either nature or grace. Nature is what God gives to him in order to his existence: Grace is whatever is supernaturally imparted, in the course of his development, in order to the further end of his becoming truly good and capable of pleasing his Maker. According to the original construction of human nature, the flesh was subject to the spirit, and the spirit to God. The flesh did not encumber the soul, because it harboured no hurtful desire. The will, free from bondage, guilt, and misery, was capable of all good. It was in man's power not to have sinned; but by a free act of his will, he admitted sin into his mind, and thereby his condition was essentially altered. Concupiscence forced its way into his nature, and implanted in it the inclination to sin. And from the first man, after he had thus become a sinner, sin has been communicated to all his descendants, partly by propagation, and partly by imitation. It spreads by propagation, inasmuch as the commission of it has left behind a sinful bias, or concupiscence, which, by virtue of their common connexion, is entailed upon all the members of the race; and it spreads by imitation, inasmuch as in every member of the race, no less than in its founder, inflamed concupiscence begets actual sin. The history of the serpent, the woman and the man, is the moral history of mankind, and what it typically pourtrays is repeated afresh in every individual. In spite of sin, however, man still retains the will in a state of freedom from constraint and of susceptibility for good. This includes the possibility of recovery. For man, however, once fallen into sin and guilt, recovery is inconceivable by any other means than grace. The mediator of recovering grace is Christ, the only perfectly righteous human being, and the only one also who, being wholly sinless and acceptable in the sight of God, really possessed the power of earning true merit either for himself or for others. By this one person, all who have fallen into a state of

enmity, are again reconciled to God, which does not mean, that there is anything like hostility on the part of God towards man requiring to be removed, but which means, that on the part of man, the principle of opposition to God, or sin, is extirpated, and the principle of love implanted in its room. As sin was spread by propagation and example, so likewise is righteousness. It is imparted to individuals partly by means of a spiritual birth from God and Christ, and partly by the imitation of Christ in their life. Whatever is in this way wrought in man is the work of grace, for grace is the sum of all the gifts bestowed upon him, through Christ and his spirit by God, in order to his higher development, the deliverance of his will from concupiscence and the inflaming it with a love of righteousness, so that he becomes meet for eternal blessedness. Grace is identical with love, and is not merely the gift of God, but is also the Holy Spirit. Yea it is God himself, for God is love, so that it really is the Divine Being who both inclines the will of man to choose, and strengthens it to perform, that which is good, working in him both to will and to do. According to this, the cause of evil is the will of the creature, whereas the cause of any good we possess is the Divine goodness, operating upon us either directly, or indirectly by the use of means. The true principle of all good, however, is love. Love, as manifested in Christ, is shed abroad in the hearts of believers by the Holy Spirit. It is the only source of genuine goodness, for only that which proceeds from love is free, and only that which is freely done is truly good. The mere objective doing of good is not the task assigned to man. His task is to do good in the right way, and the right way is to do it with the will, either brought by love into perfect harmony with that of God, or wholly absorbed in it, so that it does the good with the most absolute submission to it. In this manner subjection to God becomes the highest liberty, and the highest liberty manifests itself as entire subjection to God. Such principles of vital religion and morality could not but produce opposition to external legality, to what were called good works, and their merit, to the high value set upon vows and other ecclesiastical obligations, and even to the Church itself, by which these were all ordained and overrated. This we shall learn more fully in the sequel.

Leaving, however, these generalities, we will allow *Goch him-*

self to declare *the main principles of his theology*. First of all, it is very characteristic of the *practical tendency* of these, which is closely connected with his scriptural and anti-scholastic bent, to mark how he determines the *relation betwixt knowledge and volition*. This is a subject allied to an old and much-disputed question of mediæval theology, viz.—What is the relation betwixt faith and knowledge? The parent of Scholasticism, following the lead of Augustine,[1] had taught that faith is prior and antecedent, and knowledge posterior and derivative, in as much as only he, who has experience of Divine things, can believe in them, and only he who believes, comprehend them.[2] Speculation, however, soon attained to self-confidence, and was thereby led to assert its independence of faith, and Abelard proceeded upon the principle that we must first know, in order then to believe.[3] In opposition to this principle, which unquestionably does not sufficiently recognize life as the basis upon which religious knowledge must be reared, and which appeared in the eyes of the Church, still urgent for faith, as the height of arrogance, practical Mysticism felt itself called to combat speculation, and to lay the stress upon belief, love, and contemplation,

[1] The fundamental principle of the *Augustinian* Theology was, as is well known, Fides praecedit intellectum.

[2] The known words of *Anselm*, Neque enim quaero intelligere, ut credam sed credo, ut intelligam . . . Nam qui non crediderit, non experietur, et qui expertus non fuerit, non intelliget. Prosolog. i. de fide trinit. 2. The well-known work in which Anselm states the ontological proof bears the title, Prosologium, sive *Fides quaerens intellectum*.

[3] *Abälard* frequently warns against credulity, citing the text Ecclesiasticus xix. 4, qui credit cito, lenis est corde. Introd. ii. 3. et in a. l. His disciples asserted the principle, nihil credi posse, nisi primitus intellectum. Hist. calamit. 9. And upon this principle he himself acted. He preferred starting from the stand-point of doubt, rather than from that of faith, as his words evince, Dubitando ad inquisitionem venimus, inquirendo veritatem percipimus. The following passages are specially significant, Introduc. ad Theol. l. ii. p. 1055: Quid prodest clavis aurea, si aperire quod volumus non potest. Epit. cap. v. p. 9: Quid ad doctrinam loqui proficit, si quod dicimus exponi non potest, ut intelligatur. Introduc. ii. 3. p. 1058: Si enim cum persuadetur ut aliquid credatur, nihil est *ratione discutiendum*, utrum ista credi oporteat vel non: quid restat, nisi ut aeque tam falsa, quam vera praedicentibus acquiescamus . . . Alioquin cuiusque populi fides, quantamcunque astruat falsitatem, refelli non poterit . . . Pag. 1064: Legere et non intelligere, negligere est.

as exclusively the organ by which man appropriates Divine things. Thinking, however, was an exigence too powerful to be suppressed, and hence Scholasticism generally reverted to the fundamental principle of Augustine and Anselm, that upon the ground of faith, knowledge is a necessary growth. If, however, we take into consideration that faith is a thing essentially practical, this question also includes another, viz., whether in matters of piety the precedence is to be assigned to practice or to theory? Upon this latter question *Thomas Aquinas* had taught, that intelligence is of its own nature superior to volition, and that in the exercise of this faculty consists the highest perfection of the soul.[1] In this way, by exalting theory as the culminating point of religious life, he had likewise assigned to it the superiority over practice in the whole development of religious life. This appeared to

[1] *Thomas Aquinas* treats largely of the scientific development of the powers and capacities of the human mind, in the first part of the *Summa*, but states the relation between the *Intellectus* and *Voluntas*, more particularly from the 79th Quaestio, and onwards. In the course of this weighty disquisition, which we cannot here fully pursue, he comes, Quaest. 82. Artic. 3. to the question: Utrum voluntas sit altior potentia, quam intellectus? And here, after in his usual manner stating the contrary arguments, he takes his stand upon a deliverance of Aristotle, in the 10th book of the Ethics, and pronounces his opinion to the effect, that as the object of the Intellect is more simple and absolute, and consequently higher than that of the Will, so is the Intellect itself, considered per se, a higher faculty than the Will, although relatively and under certain circumstances, the Will may possibly be superior to the Intellect, as for instance, when the object of a volition is of a higher kind than that of an act of intelligence. He expresses himself to this effect, as follows: Respondeo dicendum, quod eminentia alicujus ad alterum potest attendi dupliciter. Uno modo simpliciter: alio modo secundum quid. . . . Si ergo intellectus et voluntas considerentur secundum se, sic intellectus eminentior invenitur. Et hoc apparet ex comparatione objectorum adinvicem. Objectum enim intellectus est simplicius et magis absolutum, quam objectum voluntatis. Nam objectum intellectus est ipsa ratio boni appetibilis: bonum autem appetible, cujus ratio est in intellectu, est objectum voluntatis. Quanto autem est aliquid simplicius et abstractius, tantum secundum se est nobilius et altius. Et ideo objectum intellectus est altius quam objectum voluntatis . . . Secundum quid autem, et per comparationem ad alterum, voluntas invenitur interdum altior intellectu, ex eo scilicet quod objectum voluntatis in altiore re invenitur, quam objectum intellectus. Sicut si dicerem auditum esse secundum quid nobiliorem visu, inquantum res aliqua, cujus est sonus, nobilior est aliqua re, cujus est color, quamvis color sit nobilior et simplicior sono.

Goch to be without foundation either in Christianity or in the nature of piety. On the contrary, he affirms that the supreme perfection of the soul rather consists in the action of the will, and, treading in the footsteps of Augustine, endeavoured in the following manner[1] to demonstrate his conviction. The soul, he says, has in the state of bliss three high and ultimate operations. These are to apprehend God by the memory, to see and know him by the intellect,[2] and to enjoy him by the will. Of these three the two former, viz., the apprehension and knowledge of God, are subservient to the third, which is the fruition of him, and which constitutes the consummate blessedness and felicity of the soul, as St Augustine declares,[3] that fulness of joy consists in the fruition of the Trinity. For just as in the case of transitory things, the highest pleasure consists in the use of such as are useful, so in the case of things eternal, supreme felicity consists in the enjoyment of those made to be enjoyed. In as much then as the highest bliss consists in the fruition of the chief good, and as fruition is an act of the will, in like manner as intuition is of the intellect, it is clear that upon an act of the will the supreme perfection of the soul depends. That fruition is an act of the will Augustine likewise attests when he says[4] that "It is to unite oneself in love with any object for that object's sake," and in another passage,[5] "We enjoy the blessings we know as such, when the will reposes in them with perfect self-satisfaction." From these words it may be inferred, that in fruition there is the combination of two acts essentially distinct, the choice of the object, and the pleasure taken in it (*dilectio et delectatio*), which, as they are acts of the same agent in reference to some good, viewed as such, so are they also mutually subordinate, each being required to complete the other, and as they severally rest upon an act of volition, so is this also the case with both combined. It may here, however, be objected, that fruition presupposes knowledge, as is implied even in the saying of the

[1] Dialog. de quatt. err. cap. 10. p. 132.

[2] Intellect is here of course taken in the higher sense of the word, inclusive of what we are accustomed to call the reason.

[3] Augustin. de trinit. l. i.

[4] Augustin. de doctrina Christ. lib. i. cap. 4: Frui est amore alicui rei inhaerere propter se ipsam.

[5] Augustin. de trinit. lib. x.

Saviour,[1] "This is life eternal, *to know* thee the true God," according to which, fruition would, in the first instance, be an act of the intellect. But then we must here also distinguish between a two-fold cognizance, that of sight and that of taste, that of apprehension and that of appropriation (*visus et gustus, vel intellectionis et fruitionis*). The former is a pure act of the intellect; the latter, however, as it cannot take place without an affectionate union of the soul with its object, is an act of volition. For the will is not merely an impulsive, but is also an apprehensive and appropriating power. The intellect apprehends the chief good as its ultimate end, which is an act of fruition. It is acknowledged that the soul, in the state of bliss, is conformed to God only by an act of love, which, among all emotions and impulses of the heart, is the only one by which the creature can correspond and reciprocate with the Creator, if not upon a footing of equality, yet with a certain degree of resemblance. Love, however, is an act of the will, and when the Apostle says, "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is," he means, not the intuitive cognizance of the understanding, but the fruitional (*fruitivam*) cognizance of the will. It is that which by the act of love conducts the glorified spirit to the highest conformity and fullest acquaintance with the Creator. The case is the same with the senses. The eye beholds a beautiful apple, and that same apple the taste enjoys. By the sight, we obtain full cognizance of the apple, as far as the power of vision reaches. But we have not by sight full cognizance of it, in respect to its enjoyable qualities, for that is only competent to the power of taste, whose office is to pierce into the heart of the apple, by the actual use of it, and more fully to apprehend its parts and properties. Hence, although fruition, pre-supposes cognition, it does not properly lie in intuitive cognition, which is an act of the intellect, but in fruitive cognition, which is an act of the will. In the same way we must also understand what the Saviour[1] said about eternal life consisting in knowing the true God. He meant the supreme and full knowledge of the chief good, by which not only the intellect is enlightened, but the affections imbued with a deep relish for it. This is also the only kind of knowledge which can justly be called

[1] John xvii. 3. [2] John xvii, 3.

wisdom.[1] It thence follows that as great illumination of understanding is to many of no benefit, as a means of conforming them to the Divine goodness, so there are others, to whom simplicity of mind is just as little any hindrance in the attainment of that object. And the reason is, because a high measure of Divine knowledge does not always lead to conformity with God, whereas a high measure of Divine love never fails to do so. God delights in the soul which glows with love, although its knowledge may be small. But he takes no delight in a soul enlightened with knowledge, but which is destitute of love, and hence the Apostle says, "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth."[2] As for the true simplicity of mind of which I speak, it consists essentially in the knowledge of Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and that is a knowledge of Christ implying[3] something more than a mere acquaintance with the Gospel History, which even sinners may acquire. Many do, in fact, acquire it by the cognizance of the intellect, which we call knowledge, but not all by the cognizance of the affections, which we call Wisdom. The Apostle preached the crucified Saviour to Jews and Greeks, and they, who did not believe, received a mere intellectual knowledge of the truth of the historical facts, and consequently reckoned the wisdom of God to be foolishness, and his sovereign power, infirmity. On the other hand, believers, instructed by the Holy Spirit, experienced in themselves that which was also in Christ. To them was given the cognizance of love, which is the right illumination of the mind, the water of saving wisdom drunk only by the children of God, and with which a stranger does not intermeddle. It is, moreover, the true light of the soul, and separates between the children of light and the children of darkness. Nor can it be acquired by the study of heathen

[1] The *sapientia*, meaning properly a *knowledge partaking of the nature of a taste*, an *intelligere* in which there is at the same time a *sapere*, and which appropriates, and takes in its object with vividness, and a lively relish. The passage contains an ingenious play upon the words which cannot possibly be reproduced in English: Ipsa denique est summa et plena cognitio summi boni, quando non solum *intellectus* illuminatur, sed et *affectus* intimo *sapore* eruditur, quae utique cognitio recto nomine *sapientia* nominatur. Dialog. cap. 10. p. 135 et 136.

[2] 1 Cor. viii. 1.

[3] Dialog. cap. 10. p. 137 sqq.

philosophers, but only by the imitation of the humble and crucified Jesus.

The *will* is accordingly the power which Goch regards as chiefly determining the bent of man's spiritua life, whether towards Divine things, or to evil, which is their contrary. No doubt the determination of the will, in every case, pre-supposes a certain knowledge; but, in that knowledge, the determinative principle does not lie. It belongs rather to the sphere of practice. Still, in reference to right conduct, the will may exist in a twofold state.[1] One is the state of terror under the law, which the Apostle calls the spirit of bondage, because therein works of righteousness are done from fear of punishment, and not for their own sake. The other is the state of love under the Gospel, and this he calls the spirit of adoption, and elsewhere the spirit of liberty, because in it the soul, being delivered by grace from the bondage of sin, does that which is good of its own inward motion. It is the second of these conditions alone which expands to the full fruition of the celestial glory, and the perfect liberty of the children of God.[2] The will, however, is based upon another power, which influences its motions. It has its root in the affections, and the heart. Love is the primal and ultimate power in man, and if the tendency of his being outwardly is determined by the will, so, inwardly, in its centre, the will receives in turn its bent and force from love. This idea is expressed by Goch in many ways and in connexion with a great variety of subjects. We shall here indicate only a few passages,—"What wings are to the bird, love is to us. They seem to add to the weight of the body. In reality, however, so far from depressing, they elevate it into the air. In like manner the yoke of love, when imposed upon our sensuous nature, not only does not weigh it down, but lifts the spirit with the senses to celestial things[3] . . . . Take from them their wings, and you take from birds the power of flying. Even so, separate love from the will, and the will is made incapable of every act that transcends nature. If it be objected, that the yoke of love does violence to

[1] Dialog. cap. 9. pag. 125 and 126.
[2] Ibid. s. 126 and 127.
[3] Ibid. cap. 11. p. 146,

the flesh, and sensuous part of our frame, we answer, that such constraint does not diminish the liberty of the will, for that is perfectly consistent wit hthe subjugation of the flesh, and even of nature itself.[1] . . . . Much more all things done from love are necessarily done with delight (*cum dulcedine*). Love sweetens even the sharp bitterness of death. Truly, it is a light and gentle yoke strengthening and refreshing him who bears it, and with pleasing motion raising him above the range of his natural faculties, to God."[2] Still more distinctly and characteristically, however, does Goch, in the following passage, declare how love is the mainspring which directs the higher life, and to which the will is obedient.[3] "Love and the will are no doubt said to be the two factors which together constitute the impelling cause to a mode of action above nature. Love, however, is by far the greater of the two,[4] partly because it inclines the will to act above nature, partly because it directs and determines it to the particular act, and partly because, without love, the will is incompetent, and cannot be rendered competent otherwise than by love, for acting above nature. For just as iron, when heated, retains the fire it has imbibed and co-operates with it, so as to produce fiery effects, not simply as iron, but as iron combined with fire, and thus is absolutely incapable of doing without the fire, what it easily does in combination with it: Even so the will, when imbued with love, co-operates with it, as a free cause, and in place of being constrained by it, is rather exalted to a higher degree of liberty and power. What it thus does, however, it does not do as mere will, but as will imbued with love, without which it would be incapable of anything of the kind."

To the same effect Goch elsewhere says,[5] "Inasmuch as the Gospel law is the law of love, according to the declaration of the Apostle, that love is the fulfilling of the law, and in as much as the law of love is the law of liberty, whereas the law of fear is the law of bondage, it follows, that whoever binds himself by the promise of faith to the observance of the Gospel, devotes himself

[1] Dialog. s. 149.
[2] Ibid. s. 147 and 148.
[3] Ibid. cap. 16. p. 172. 173.
[4] . . . . tamen charitas est multo principalior.
[5] Dialog. cap. 12 p. 134, 155.

to the exercise of Divine love, because to fulfil the Gospel law is nothing else than to discharge the duties of that love. . . . This exercise of Divine love does not diminish the freedom of the human will, but perfects it, because whatsoever is done from love is most of all considered free."

This leads us to another point to which, in the foregoing passages, allusion has already been made. It is, that true *freedom* springs only from love, so that in this respect also, love appears to be the fountain and centre of the higher life. *Love* and *freedom* are the *constituent elements of our being*, and they are also the *fundamental principles of the Gospel.* Here again, however, love claims the superiority, as that which alone makes us truly free. If we collect the thoughts which Goch has expressed in various passages to this effect, the sum of them is as follows: God is love, but he is at the same time the freest of all beings. In his freedom he is infinitely loving, and in his love he is infinitely free; and that which he himself is, he also desires created spirits to be, and more and more to become, by continual approximation and continual assimilation to him. He is to all intelligent beings the creative principle of love and freedom, and it is *by love that he makes them free.* The state of the matter is this: All existing things have emanated from the Divine freedom, and, by the same way in which they came from him, they must return back to God. Such is the case with spiritual beings. Issuing from God, by the free exercise of his will, they must, by the free exercise of their own, turn towards him and return to him.[1] That the rational soul is the offspring of the freedom of the Divine will, is evident, for the Divine will is the productive principle of all created things. The Divine will, however, is a free agent, and consequently all created things were called into being by the Divine freedom. Nor can it be here objected, that the Divine knowledge is the anterior and higher cause in creation *(principalis causa)*, for the Divine intelligence is, doubtless, the conceptive principle of things *(principium rerum repraesentativum)*, by virtue of which God has them all present in his eternal mind, but the proper and

[1] Dialog. cap. 10. p. 139: Sciendum, quod anima rationalis eodem modo reducitur in Deum, quomodo exit a Deo: sed per libertatem divinae voluntatis exit a Deo, ergo per libertatem suae voluntatis debet reduci in Deum.

productive principle (*principium elicitivum et productivum*) is his will, for in the order of causes, that is the higher, which, in and of itself, rules its own action, and such is the will. That the soul, however, must return to God by the way of freedom, results from the nature of the Gospel law.[1] The law of the Gospel is a law of love, and can only be obeyed in and from love. All, however, that is done from love, is also done with freedom. Indeed, no other actions are so free. All things are moved and brought to their own place by their gravity,[2] the light up and the heavy down. But the gravity of the rational soul is love, the first and proper motive which inclines the will to its object. That which is done from love, however, is done freely and spontaneously in the highest sense of the words. In as much, therefore, as it is by love that the soul aspires after all good, and as love is the freest movement of the will, it is clear that the soul aspires after all good of free will and not by compulsion. . . . . And as the will receives strength from love, and as its power consists in the faculty of freedom, it is evident that the more powerful the will is, the more it is also free."[3]

In this manner genuine liberty springs only from love, just as true love always manifests itself in the form of the most perfect freedom. The fountain of true love, however, is God, the creative and animating principle of all things. "All things brought by creation into existence," says Goch,[4] "have their existence in God more perfectly than in themselves, because in him they have an eternal, in themselves, merely a temporal and created existence. Every created good is in its nature participant and dependent, and the good, which is dependent, has its basis in the uncreated, which is the only self-existent good. This being the case, it is manifest that there can be no good in the human will which has not been produced in it by the Divine will, the sole self-subsistent good, and the productive cause of all good in the creatures. Hence St Paul, exulting in the abundance of spiritual blessings, directs the eye of his mind to the Lord, of whose rich beneficence they are all the work, and who divides them to every man seve-

[1] This is expounded, Dialog. cap. 11. p. 141, sq.
[2] Ibid. p. 144.
[3] Ibid. p. 144 at bottom, and 145 at top.
[4] Ibid. cap. 21. p. 218.

rally as he will.[1] The Divine love awakens reciprocal love in man. Grace kindles the spark in his heart, and thus spontaneous love determines the will, and directs it in a way by which, from his inmost being, man becomes good and like God. It is in this sense that Christ has brought Divine liberty to light. He himself, and faith in him, have become a principle of freedom to all, and with the fullest right may his religion be designated the religion of liberty.[2]

Nay more, as *love* is the ground-work of freedom, so also does it include the best *guarantee of everlasting life*. It is the firm basis of the belief of immortality, in as much as it is imperishable, continuing in the celestial country the same as it was on this scene of earthly pilgrimage,[3] and in as much as a being, who for ever loves, must necessarily for ever exist. This latter reason is conceived with equal cogency and depth, and is expressed by Goch in the following beautiful words:[4] "The love of the everlasting good cannot but be itself everlasting. For, as it is the nature of love to desert self and penetrate into its object, and thus to assume its object's form, the party loving becomes assimilated in nature to the party beloved, and hence, as God is that chief and eternal good which the soul loves, so is this love of the soul, in its nature, eternal too."

[1] Dialog. p. 219. With which comp. cap. 22. p. 266, 237.

[2] Ibid. cap. 18. p. 168 and 187. At the end of the disquisition, we have: Et sic religio Christiana est ab exordio a Christo sub lege evangelica, libera, in libertate spiritus ordinata.

[3] Dialog. cap. 16. p. 174.

[4] Ibid. p. 174 and 175.

PART SECOND.

GOCH'S THEOLOGY IN ITS POSITIVE ASPECT.

THE BOOK ON CHRISTIAN LIBERTY.

Enough has been said to indicate the general position held by Goch as a Theologian. We have found that the formal principle of his Theology is the Divine revelation in Scripture, and the substantial principle, love,—love, in the first instance, on the part of God, from whose creative power human love emanates, and, in the next instance, love on the part of man, which is the productive cause of all good. In fact, the thought which lies at the basis of all his Theology may be expressed in some such formula as this,—God, who is love, is thereby the source of all good. Or, God is the everlasting and creative love, and man the created, which, having emanated from God, must through God return to him again; and the means by which this return is effected is Christ's work of redemption leading by love to liberty. This rudimental thought is unfolded in a great variety of ways, both thetically and antithetically; and it is now time to enter upon the *particulars of his Theology.*

And here the two *principal works of Goch* will serve for a thread to guide us, fully exhibiting as they do, the internal organism of his thoughts, and his method of exposition. These two works are the Book *on the Liberty of the Christian Religion,*[1] and the Treatise, written in the form of a dialogue, on the *four*

[1] De libertate christiana or de libertate christianæ religionis, edid. Corn. Grapheus Antwerp. 1521. On the literary character of the book, see the sequel.

errors touching the evangelical Law.[1] The first chiefly contains *Goch's positive convictions* on the principles of Christian knowledge, human nature, and the method of salvation. In the second, we have mainly his controversy with the false tendencies of the age, and the bulk of his Reformatory views. Inasmuch, however, as in his instance, like that of all genuine reformers, opposition is based upon position, so, consonantly with the nature of the case, we commence with the contents of that treatise which is predominantly positive. This order may also have a chronological foundation, for, although we possess no precise information as to the dates of Goch's writings, still it is probable, that he first settled the groundwork of his Christian convictions, and then proceeded from that to controversy. Moreover, the Treatise on the four errors displays more freedom of mind and language, and consequently appears to belong to a riper stage of life, than the more scholastic book on Christian liberty. In fine, account must also be taken of the circumstance, that when old authors enumerate the writings of Goch, the Book upon Christian liberty is usually mentioned first, and as it is likewise a great *bibliographical rarity*, and certainly known by personal inspection to very few ecclesiastical historians, it seems proper to present its contents in extracts of some length.

After a short introduction, the work treats in six books, 1, of the interpretation of Scripture as the only sure source of Christian faith; 2, of the human will and its operations; 3, of merit and the conditions on which it depends; 4, of vows and questions connected with them; 5, of the different positions, as regards moral conduct, occupied by parties who are under vows, and by parties who are not; 6, of the objections made to Goch's views by *Engelbert*, a monk of the order of St Thomas. Of these six books, three entire, and part of the fourth, are all that have been preserved.[2] We must not, however, overrate the loss of the rest, because the subjects of them are discussed by Goch in his Treatise on the four errors. The substance of the books before us is as follows.

[1] Dialogus de quatuor erroribus circa legem evangelicam exortis—we shall allude to it in the course of the work.

[2] There stands at the end, Finis horum, reliqua desyderamus.

CHAPTER FIRST.

THE AUTHORITY AND INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE. SCRIPTURE AND PHILOSOPHY.[1]

Scripture, says Goch,[2] is the light of the human intellect, and as the human intellect is enlightened by a two-fold light, so is there also a two-fold Scripture, one natural and another supernatural. The former is philosophy, of which we shall treat in the sequel. The second, which conducts the intellect to the knowledge of the highest truth, and the will to the love of the chief good, is *Canonical Scripture*, the rule of the Church general, and the foundation, upon which, as upon an immoveable rock, faith rests. This Scripture is the only one, which, being derived from the highest truth, possesses an incontrovertible *authority*, from which nothing can be taken away, and to which nothing can be added, so that all other writings are authoritative only in proportion to their consonance with canonical Scripture.

The place thus assigned to Scripture necessarily gives the greatest importance to its *interpretation*. Following the lead of the ancients, Goch affirms that there are four senses in Scripture,—the literal, the allegorical, the tropological, and the anagogical.[3] Having been vouchsafed by God, for the purpose of implanting in man, faith, love, and hope, and conducting him to salvation, Scripture must necessarily contain all that is requisite for that end. The literal sense teaches the things we most need to know, viz., what has happened, and what is the will, and what the purpose of God; the allegorical sense, what belongs to the faith through which man is consecrated to life; the anagogical, what he has to hope; the tropological, what in virtue of his will, when moulded by love, it is his duty to do. The

[1] The discussion of these subjects forms the contents of the *First Book*.

[2] Book i. cap. 1.

[3] He makes use of the well-known lines:

Litera gesta docet, quid credas Allegoria,
Tropologia quid agas, quid speres Anagogia.

three last are comprehended under the name of the spiritual sense; and thus again the senses of Scripture are essentially of two kinds,—the literal, and the spiritual or mystical. The literal sense, primarily intended by God, is to be found in all those passages, whether historical, prophetical, or didactic, in which his will and purpose are clearly and intelligibly expressed, according to the plain meaning of the terms. On the other hand, where the letter is somewhat obscure, and the Divine purpose is veiled beneath signs and figures, recourse must be had to the spiritual sense. Where the historical connexion ends, there the door opens to the mystical meaning. A passage may sometimes be explained in four, sometimes in three, and sometimes in two ways; sometimes it admits of only a single sense. Many have a literal without a mystical meaning, and many a mystical without a literal.[1]

Although, however, this be the case,[2] yet, when a dispute arises among the learned, respecting the import of Scripture, no *argument*, conclusive for the refutation of error, can be drawn *except from the literal sense*, and for this reason, the literal sense is superior to the rest, to which we ought to have recourse only when a passage, if literally interpreted, contains nothing instructive to faith, or useful for morality. Inasmuch, however, as many passages may be explained literally, and yet in several different senses, certain rules of procedure must be laid down for expiscating which of these is the proper one. It is not indeed possible to give a general rule of decision in such cases, but the following hints may serve for direction.[3] 1. That literal sense is the right one, and should be preferred to every other, which corresponds most fully with the signification of the words, either in the passage in question, or in some parallel and plainer passage; for the Scripture is not so concealed in single texts, as not to be more apparent in others more simple; and what is doubtful is always to be determined by the sense which results from other and plainer texts. Where there is no plainer text, the connexion

[1] In Goch's opinion, the literal interpretation ought to be applied in almost every case to the *Epistles of Paul*. De Lib. christ. l. iii. cap. 2.

[2] Book i. cap. 2.

[3] Cap. 5.

must principally decide. 2. That sense is most to be approved[1] which is given by those Catholic teachers, who live according to the spirit of the Church, and who found their expositions upon Scripture, more than upon natural reason. For it is to be presumed respecting persons living within the Church's bosom, that they are enlightened by the spirit of truth, in a higher degree than others, whereas the light of natural reason, which is the only guide of unbelievers, however acute, does not suffice for an acquaintance with the supernatural things which are taught in Scripture. 3. That sense appears to merit the preference[2] which is most consonant with the decisions of the Church, and how much soever an interpretation may seem to correspond with the letter, still it is not to be considered as the true one, if found to be manifestly contradictory to these decisions. This is especially true in matters of faith, which God has so clearly revealed to the Church, whereas in matters of practice, no such decided certainty is attainable, but much has been reserved for future investigation. 4. Finally, of two meanings we ought to prefer that[3] which has most foundation in sound reason, because God, being the highest wisdom and the fountain of Scripture, is more rational than any man, and in all Scripture proceeds rationally. A passage, however, literally referring to facts of the Old Testament, or to the manifestation of Jesus Christ, admits of being also interpreted allegorically,[4] when it is applied to the mystical body of Christ which is the Church; morally, when applied to the actions of the members of this body, according to the pattern of the head; and anagogically, when applied to the end and aim of the actions of these members, which is eternal life. Moreover, a text which, according to the letter, relates to the Church, may likewise be interpreted morally and anagogically. And a passage of moral import is also susceptible of an anagogical application. That text, however, which in its literal sense refers to the state of glory, and which is consequently anagogical, can be explained in no other, inasmuch as it is figurative of nothing else, and can prefigure nothing higher.

From these, *Goch's principles of interpretation*, we see upon the one hand, how necessarily they led to the position he main-

[1] Cap. 8. [2] Cap. 9. [3] Cap. 10. [4] Cap. 12.

tained, viz., that of adherence to Christian antiquity, and to the Church as it was in the days in which he lived. For he sanctions the mystical interpretation of Scripture, which had prevailed from the earliest time, was cultivated by the Alexandrian School, and was also indispensable for the exegetical defence of the later system of the Catholic Church. And he moreover assigns a special weight to the expositions of orthodox teachers, and requires that Scriptural explanation shall accord with the rule of the Church. On the other hand, we also discover in his principles of interpretation, the commencement of something *new* and *reformatory*, inasmuch as he requires, that the Scripture shall be explained principally by itself, gives a decided preference to the literal and historical senses above the mystical, and restricts to the former the power of furnishing arguments on Theological subjects. Still more, however, does the *reformatory* tendency manifest itself in Goch, when treating of the *authority of Scripture*, and of its *relation to Philosophy*. No doubt he is not of opinion,[1] that Scripture, although containing infallible truth, obliges us in every passage in the same uniform way to assent to its statements. In reference to both its doctrinal and moral import, he distinguishes between what is substantially and directly[2] affirmed, and also corroborated by the authority of the Church, and what is only derivatively and indirectly[3] intimated, but has never been settled by the Church in elaborated articles of faith; and he says with respect to the former class of statements, that Scripture binds all believers indiscriminately to assent to them, so that they cannot, without mortal sin, hold the contrary opinion, though held by the greatest teacher. To the latter, however, it does not oblige all without distinction to assent; but any one, without incurring the danger of sin, may maintain the opposite, provided that he does so not from obstinate perversity, but, it may be, from imperfect acquaintance with Scripture, and that he is always ready in mind to believe and hold what the Church believes and holds and what the Scripture means. It thus appears that Goch is not a believer in the mere letter of Scripture. Whereas, on the other hand, he decidedly and exclusively maintains the *authority*

[1] Cap. 11. [2] Principaliter et directe. [3] Secundarie et indirecte.

of canonical Scripture, in opposition to what he calls *natural Scripture*, meaning thereby *the assertions of philosophers and modern teachers*, who attempt to demonstrate or confute revealed and supernatural truth by proofs derived from natural reason.

To establish this relation more correctly, Goch discusses three points:[1] What *natural Scripture*, or that of the *philosophers*, is in itself; what authority it possesses; and what weight is due to the teachers who build their demonstrations upon it.

On the *first* point, and to distinguish them broadly from the Scriptures, as the book of life, Goch denominates[2] the writings of the philosophers, books of death, and believes himself able to prove them to be so in three ways, and first, by the manner of their production. The writings of philosophers are all produced by men from the reflections of their intellect. The insight, however, which is derived from the natural light of the intellect, without the higher illumination of faith, does not lead to the knowledge of those Divine attributes, which lie beyond the circle of human thought, but only to the knowledge of such as man can learn by inference from himself. By its means, no doubt, we may become acquainted with the working and power of God, and with the Godhead generally, but not with God as the Author of all good; and hence such knowledge does not serve to guide us, through humility, to the love of God, but, inasmuch as we fancy that it is the reward of our own exertions, it misguides us to pride and vain-glory. Secondly, by their effect. The natural light of the understanding cannot rise above its own limits, and therefore can only regulate[4] that which is congenial with itself. Hence, we find, that although it may enlighten us with a certain knowledge of God, it still leaves the soul cold and uninflamed by the love of him. We must here also consider that wisdom of this sort does not subject its possessor to the law of God. It is consequently opposed to him, and far from imparting life, can lead to nothing but death. Thirdly, by their end and aim. In their pursuit of Divine knowledge, philosophers propose to themselves no other object to be gained but the knowledge they

[1] Book i. cap. 13—26.
[2] Cap. 13.
[3] Ex effectu operandi.
[4] Ordinare.

pursue, regarding that as an ornament of the mind. Hence, to them the chief good is of an intellectual nature.[1] In this, however, they commit a great error, for they stop short of becoming acquainted with that true happiness which consists in the love of God. They have a sort of knowledge, but no fruition or relish, of that which is good. Accordingly, as the Scripture of philosophers relates merely to the government and happiness of the present life, and as the present life, compared with eternity, may be called death, so also may the books, which contain this Scripture, be justly designated books of death.

On the question of the *authority of natural Scripture*,[2] Goch defines the word authority to mean a positive assurance of what is infallibly true, and for this he requires three things; a firm foundation for faith to rest upon, convincing evidence, and infallibility. He then proceeds. These properties belong to canonical Scripture. It rests upon the rock of Divine revelation. It possesses the evidence of knowledge—a knowledge which shall one day be perfect and intuitive in the celestial state, where figures cease, and truth is fully beheld, and which even now, and already here on earth, is perfect in Christ, (for he spake to us not merely as one travelling to a place *(viator)* in a prophetic way, but as one fully comprehending it *(comprehensor)* by intuitive perception)[3]—a knowledge prophetical in the case of Divinely enlightened men, and figurative in that of believers, who sojourn upon earth in the light of faith. It has likewise the property of infallibility, in respect that it cannot be altered by any power, not even by that of God. The writings of philosophers, on the contrary, have but a natural certainty and rational evidence. This consists in the certainty of their first principles. It does not lie so much in that of the inferences drawn; for into these error possibly may, and often does, creep. But it lies rather in the certainty of the ultimate propositions which are self-evident, or may be recognized from the idea. Take for instance the following: Every conceivable thing either does, or does not exist, or The whole is greater than the part. Such is the evidence of natural certainty, and within its limits philosophers confine their enquiries. It follows that their writings can possess only a natural authority,

[1] Optimum intelligibile. [2] Cap. 14. 15. 16. [3] Cap. 15.

and not even that in all respects. They possess it in fact only in respect of the first principles which involve their own evidence. What conclusion, however, can natural knowledge possibly draw respecting the truth which transcends nature? Deduction must be preceded by comprehension. Can a man draw inferences from that which he does not understand? Just as little as the blind can judge of colour. Accordingly the knowledge of philosophers can be true only within the boundaries of their insight, and that reaches no farther than their natural capacity. It has no authority in reference to the things of which we take cognizance in a supernatural way. On the contrary, the attempt to comprehend naturally that which is supernatural has been the source of all errors and heresies. Hence the writings of all teachers, ancient and modern, however embued with piety and learning, possess no authority of their own, and apart from that which they may derive from reference to canonical Scripture, for as, in the writings of philosophers, natural truth is ascertained by tracing it back to first and self-evident principles and ideas, so in the writings of orthodox teachers, the truth as to what we must believe and hope and love, is recognized by referring to Scripture, the offspring of Divine revelation.

From this we also learn the *weight* due to *the writings of those teachers* who found their demonstrations on *philosophy*. *Goch*, sensible of the need, to which we have already alluded, of a sharp opposition to the reigning philosophy, reminds the reader of the pernicious excrescences of speculation, such for instance as appeared among the students at Paris,[1] and were the offspring of a most objectionable distinction between philosophical and theological truth, and then expresses himself substantially as follows:[2] There is but *one* truth,[3] the canonical and revealed, and so great is its power and authority, that whatever is repugnant to it, must be regarded as undoubtedly alien and heretical. If, however, in this way, truth and falsehood are absolutely distinct, then that is necessarily false, which is not true, and in as much as philosophical truth is alien to that which is canonical and which alone deserves the name, it ought justly to be designated as

[1] Cap. 17. 18. See above.
[2] Cap. 19.
[3] Goch, here, of course speaks solely of the province of religion.

something false. Even in the days of the Apostles, this kind of error was by false teachers intermingled with canonical truth, and defiled the faith of Christians. If, however, such a thing could happen at a time, when the light of canonical truth beamed forth in all its strength, and when faith blazed with the keenest ardour of love, what may not happen in these times of ours, when faith begins to languish, and the windows of the temple, or in other words, the priests of the Church, contract an earthly dimness, and lose their light. From day to day things are growing worse and more dangerous. Is not canonical truth, both in the doctrines of the faith and the precepts of morality, the subject of so great a diversity of sentiment, that opinions, not to call them fancies of the brain, are almost as numerous as heads? Modern teachers contend earnestly, each for his own views, and the fatal consequence is, that truth which is indivisible is divided, and all, following their several masters, exclaim: one, I am an Abertist, another, I a Thomist, another, I am a Scotist, each takes part against the other, for this teacher or that. But can that be good and laudable now, which was so baneful in the Apostle's day? Or can that be now profitable to the Church which was then its ruin? Nevertheless,[1] although the world be already filled with writings in which canonical truth is mixed with philosophical vanity, although many are much more intent upon defending their masters than upon defending Christ, the genuine disciples of truth will embrace, and the preachers of it proclaim, no other doctrine, but that which has its foundation in Holy Scripture, and coincides with the canon; as the Apostle testifies of himself, when he says: "For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God, but as in sincerity, in the sight of God, speak we in Christ."

To this no doubt objections may be made. Many allege[2] that the doctrines of philosophy are derived, though not from Divine revelation, still from the light of sound understanding, and contend, that as sound understanding is itself derived from God, nothing that emanates from it ought to be considered as alien from him. The answer is: Philosophers have never attained to soundness of understanding, and therefore cannot possibly enjoy its

[1] Cap. 20. [2] Cap. 21.

light; and the proper way to argue is as follows: The understanding has been obscured by the Fall, and cannot be healed by its own natural light. The only effectual remedy is justifying grace, by means of which faith's supernatural light is let in upon it, and restores its health. Hence even that soundness of understanding which is alleged, is not natural, but is the work of grace, and transcends nature. The Apostle speaks to the same effect in the Epistle to the Romans i. chap. Others maintain[1] that the writings of philosophers, although perhaps of no use as respects faith, may yet be profitable for morals and instruction in virtue. The answer is: The good that is in them is neutralized by the evil with which it is mixed. They hide the simple and certain truth with definitions and argumentations, transplant it into the field of controversy, and thereby render it wavering and doubtful. Finally, there are others[2] who consider it requisite that the study of the philosophic sciences should be cultivated in the Church, in order that, at least in the hour of assault and difficulty, there may be champions properly qualified for the defence of the faith. But let them who call for this say, whether Catholic truth has ever been so violently assailed, as by those, who, being addicted to philosophy, attempted to comprehend, and argument in a natural manner, upon things that are supernatural, and whether all heresies have not emanated from such parties as an Arius, a Nestorius, a Manichaeus, and a Pelagius. On the contrary, Catholic simplicity has never yet injured the Church, and although there have been some monks, who have done harm to the Catholic faith, as for instance Pelagius, still even these gathered their venom, not from the purity of monastic institutions, but from philosophy alone. From what other source, for example, did Pelagius draw the tenet peculiar to him, that it is possible to earn salvation by the exertion of one's own will, and without love? If, however, it be asked, with what weapons the errors which proceed from philosophy are to be combatted? the Apostle Paul answers, when, in the Epistle to Titus, he depicts the qualifications of a bishop, and requires of him, for the purpose of resisting gainsayers, not a knowledge of all other things, but the knowledge of the faith, or in other words, of canonical truth,

[1] Cap. 22. [2] Cap. 26.

bidding him refute them by the faithful word, and sound doctrine, without entangling himself in foolish questions and useless disputations.

Having thus secured the foundation, identical with that from which the Reformation afterward proceeded, he rears upon it the views evolved in the *Second* and *Third Book*, and which we sum up as follows.

CHAPTER SECOND.

GOCH'S DOCTRINE ON HUMAN NATURE AND THE METHOD OF SALVATION. NATURE AND GRACE. SIN AND REDEMPTION. HUMAN MERIT AND THE MERIT OF CHRIST.

The principles maintained by Goch respecting the rule of Faith, and which we have hitherto delineated, are decidedly opposed to Scholasticism. And not less so are those he held respecting its subject matter, which we have still to develop. The former are antithetical to the philosophism of the reigning theology, the latter to its Pelagianism. The worst offence of Pelagianism was, that it obliterated *the distinction, undeniably founded in Christianity, between nature and grace.* Hence, Goch sets out with an exact statement of this antithesis,[1] and defines the relative ideas in the following way. All that is given by God to man, in order to his *existence*, is *nature*, and all that was given to him in creation, in order to his being good in a natural way, was a *gift of nature.* On the contrary, all that is given to man in the *course of life*,[2] in order to make him good, by virtue of supernatural goodness, is *grace.* In fine, what is given to the elect in the *perfect* state,[3] in order to their being perfected in supernatural goodness, is *glory*.[4] In this manner, the Creator has provided

[1] Book ii. cap. 1. [2] In via. [3] In patria. [4] Gloria.

three things for the purpose of perfecting man. In the first place, he gives him nature, which makes him susceptible of blessedness, then grace, which makes him meet for it, and finally glory, which actually confers it upon him. In the first state, man possesses the natural will, which may aspire after supernatural good, but neither chooses nor can perform it. In the second, he possesses the sanctified will, imparted to him by the Holy Ghost, which both chooses and can do the higher good. In the third, he possesses the will made perfect in goodness, and by virtue of it not only chooses and performs the supernatural good, but can never more desist from loving and performing it; and this is the true liberty of the children of God.

Moreover,[1] whatever has been brought into existence by God in creation, is, in as far as it is, nature; and, in as far as it is nature, is also good, because all nature is good. It may be asked, if then all nature be good, whether the evil nature be so too? for there is an evil nature, and it is well known, both that man is nature, and that he is evil. And yet whatever has been created, must in itself be good. The answer is, evil is of a twofold kind, that which corrupts the goodness of nature, and that by which the sin of its corruption is punished. The first is *sin*, which God did not create, and which therefore is properly nothing but a mere privation of that which is naturally good. The second is the *penalty* appointed for it by Divine justice. This second kind of evil, being produced by God, is for that reason, likewise good, for although it may be bad for the body, which it destroys, it is yet good for the soul, which it heals. Thus it is both good and bad together; just as a wicked man may be said to be both good and bad, good as man, but bad as a sinner. A wicked man is accordingly a perverted good,[2] and violates the rule of the logicians, who maintain, that opposites cannot exist simultaneously in the same subject.[3] Nay it may be asserted generally that the bad never exists without the good, and can only exist in connexion with it; for if there were nothing good which could be corrupted, there could also be nothing bad to corrupt it. The good which cannot possibly be corrupted is the perfect; that, however, which

[1] Cap. 2.

[2] Malum bonum.

[3] An echo of the modern speculative Logic.

can be so greatly corrupted, as in every respect to be despoiled of good, is no longer competent to exist.[1]

Here also it might be objected,[2] If the will belong to the nature of the soul, if nature be of itself good, and the soul, as a natural object, unchangeable, how can the natural will become depraved? In order to solve this difficulty, a distinction must be drawn between the will as a faculty, and the will as an operation. In the first sense, the will is never depraved, but in the second it is, whenever it proposes to itself a wrong end, or employs wrong means for a good one. As a faculty, the will continues undepraved, even amidst wicked actions; but as an operation, it may be corrupted, by taking a wrong bias.

After having in this way demonstrated the possibility of evil, or sin, within the bounds of what God created good, viz., nature, Goch proceeds[3] to explain the *actual origin of evil*, and as he virtually traces it back to the *will of the creature*, he requires to start with a definition of the will. The *will*, he says, is that movement by which the mind, without external constraint, rejects or aspires to an object. It is either a power,[4] or it is an operation[5] of the power. As operation in reference to good, it is either natural, or sanctified,[6] or glorified[7] will. The natural and the sanctified wills are both liable to change; the glorified is exalted above all change. When God created man from a clod of earth, and breathed into him a living soul,[8] he, at the same time in and with that, gave him a good will, likewise superadding to it, the aid of natural grace, the natural faculty of freedom. In virtue of this *freedom* it was possible for man to stand, and retain the goodness of his nature. He might never have deviated from it, if he had so willed. But this willing not to deviate from what is good in nature, man lost by means of liberty. If he had received the willingness, as he did the ability, not to forsake it, he would not have fallen. The aid of natural grace, however, which God superadded, was merely the pure and unblemished

[1] According to this, Goch, to be consistent with himself, must either have denied the existence of the Devil, or ascribed to that Being some good qualities. Of these ideas, however, there is no trace elsewhere in his works.

[2] Cap. 4. [3] Cap. 5. [4] potentia. [5] actus potentiae. [6] voluntas gratuita. [7] voluntas glorificata. [8] Cap. 6.

freedom of the will, the will's incorrupt rectitude,[1] the soundness and vigour of all the powers of the soul. This was no innate quality of nature, but was superadded by God[2] as a special gift, in order that man might be able, if he were willing, to keep the good things of nature. Hence, when he sinned, man was deprived of those blessings of grace, and wounded in the nature of his original powers, not indeed that their substance was injured, but that their operation was impaired. Disobedience, however, gave birth to two other evils, viz., ignorance respecting what it is a man's duty to do, and inclination to that which is hurtful, with which, as their attendants, error and pain entered, and from which all the misery of the rational nature proceeds.

In thus inculcating the doctrine of a corruption propagated from the first transgression, or in other words, of *original sin*, and, unlike most of the Schoolmen, conceiving it not as a mere negation, the want of original righteousness, but as being likewise a positive thing, the wounding of the natural powers, and a bent towards evil, he still holds fast the idea of a *capability of salvation*, even in the sinful state, and for this capability he finds a basis in *freedom*. Freedom, says Goch,[3] is, like the power of the human will, threefold. The first freedom, which belongs to the nature of the will as a power, and is the foundation of man's responsibility for his actions, is the will's exemption from constraint, which is found equally in the good and the bad. The second consists in being free from sin. It belonged to man before the Fall, but he lost it by transgression, and now can only recover it through the grace of the Mediator. It is not, however, even when recovered, the same as it was before the Fall. Before the Fall, the state of it was, that it did not tempt to sin. Since the Fall, all we can say of it is, that sin does not reign, although appetence and infirmity remain. There is this, however, in the nature of the will (and it is the point of which salvation takes hold), that although injured by sin, it is not *annihilated;* for, if all that is good in nature were lost and corrupted, no restitution of it would be possible. Finally, the third and perfect kind of freedom, which

[1] rectitudo.

[2] The *donum superadditum* of the Scholastics and the Catholic Doctrinalists.

[3] Cap. 7. 8.

corresponds with the glorified state, consists in being free from misery, that is, from fear, pain, error, and all possibility of sinning.

But, however unhesitatingly, Goch infers general sinfulness, from the first act of sin, still *in every individual* he considers *actual sin* as originating in the co-operation of the same agencies, by whose false position towards each other the first sin was produced.[1] Just as in the case of our first parents, there was a concurrence of three parties, of the enticing serpent, of the woman who yielded to the enticement, and of the man who listened to the woman more than to the voice of God, the same still happens every day in every individual, even though he may have been renovated by grace. The three things are sensuality, which corresponds with the serpent, the inferior understanding corresponding with the woman, and the higher understanding which again corresponds with the man. Spiritually these exist in us all, so that no one needs to have an external enemy, but in and of himself has something which assails him, and against which he has to contend in defence of Paradise. The sensual motion, when sin's temptation takes effect, suggests to the inferior understanding, as the serpent did to the woman, that it should gratify the desire which the senses have kindled, and taste its pleasantness in fruition. When this is done, it is the serpent addressing the woman, and if the matter stops with the sensual excitement, a small and venial sin is committed. Moreover if the inferior understanding, which occupies itself with earthly things, takes in the impression, but indulges it merely in thought, without determining to put it into execution, in that case, the woman only has eaten the forbidden fruit, not the man, by whose authority the will has been restrained from proceeding; and in this case, according to circumstances, the sin may be either venial or mortal. If, however, in fine, the higher understanding be so influenced by the enticement to sin, which it has received from the inferior, as that it resolves to proceed to action, in that case the woman has given the forbidden fruit to the man, whether the act be really committed or not. The understanding, however, of whose determination we speak,[2] is not in these cases to be conceived, as the intelligent faculty[3] of the

[1] Cap. 9. 10. Cap. 11. [3] virtus apprehensiva.

soul, but as a faculty not differing from the will, and rather constituting with it the soul's *undivided* nature. For the soul, as consisting of Memory, Judgment and Will, is a type of the Divine Trinity,[1] and as the works of the uncreated Trinity are undivided, so are also the works of the created Trinity. Hence the soul can perform no act in which the three do not co-operate, the memory pourtraying, the judgment controlling, and the will choosing and deciding.

The result from all this is,[2] that as nothing but good comes from God, the *cause of all evil can lie only in the created will*, whether it be of angel or man, who falls from conformity to the uncreated will of God. For the act of volition on the part of the sinful creature, had no antecedent from which evil could have sprung; its antecedent being the good will created in him by God, and so equipped, that, if he had so pleased, the creature might have persevered in goodness. Accordingly the pravity of sin has originated from that which is good, and which, without any cause inwardly constraining it, voluntarily apostatized to evil. Hence both angel and man were justly punished by God, but the angel more severely than the man, because while there was nothing to induce the former to sin, the latter was assailed if not by inward yet by outward temptation. Now, as man has a two-fold nature,[2] one bodily and another spiritual, so is there also a two-fold evil, and as the bodily nature draws its strength and vigour from the spiritual, so also has the evil of the bodily nature originated in that of the spiritual. By man's

[1] Cap. 13—15. Here follows a further exposition of the proposition, that man, although merely an analogous and not a perfectly adequate *Image*, is yet a true image not only of the Deity generally, but of the *Triune* God, and in fact not of the Father, Son, or Holy Ghost severally, but of *the Trinity as a whole*. This proposition, which the Schoolmen developed on Augustinian principles, does not concern us here as a speculative question, inasmuch as it does not come within the circle of the Reformation. The practical inference drawn from it, however, is of great importance. It was in fact this conception of human nature, as the creature—image of the Trinity, which mainly guarded the Psychology of *Goch*, *John Wessel*, and other mediæval theologians, from the error of conceiving the human powers and faculties divided into such fractions as we frequently find them in modern Psychology and Anthropology, and by which the recognition of the inward and indivisible unity of the human being is determined a priori.

[2] Cap. 19. [3] Cap 20.

apostacy from union with the Divine will, the harmony in the powers of his bodily nature was destroyed, and a languor[1] introduced which is the lust or the law of the flesh. In this manner, original sin, the kindling spark of sin in all, and with which all are born, has sprung from the actual sin of Adam. In this respect the case with the descendant is the inverse of that with the progenitor. In the latter, corruption originated from actual sin. In the former, it is propagated by sinful concupiscence from parents to children (and is the basis of actual sin). In the former, it proceeded from the soul to the sensuous part. In the latter, it proceeds from the sensuous part to the soul; the soul, in fact, is not propagated, but implanted in the body already organized.[2] For this reason, it does not contain within it the cause of sin, but catches defilement from sin through the medium of the flesh, which is sin's conductor.

And now, if the result be, that all evil orignates in the creature and the created will, the necessary reverse will be found in the proposition, that even at first, and still more after the creatures' lapse into sin, *every thing that is good in it is derived solely from God*, from Divine *grace*. Inasmuch, however, as even in the state of sin, man retains the will, as freedom from constraint, and inasmuch as the goodness, which is the offspring of grace, cannot be forcibly or mechanically imparted to it, the consequence is, that the recovery of the sinner is always brought about by means of his *liberty*. This is the point mainly handled by Goch in the sequel of the work,[3] in which he treats of *saving* and *sanctifying grace* and of their operations.

He defines *grace* generally to be[4] the gift of God imparted to man in the course of his development,[5] for the purpose of emancipating his will from the bondage of concupiscence, and inflaming it with the love of that righteousness, which renders him worthy of eternal salvation. The various definitions given of the

[1] Languor.

[2] Goch, as we hence perceive, was not, as might be inferred from his Augustinian principles, a *Traducianer*, but a *Creatianer*.

[3] Book ii. cap. 23—42. [4] Cap. 23. [5] in via.

nature of grace, viz., that it is faith working by love, or love shed abroad in the heart, or the right disposition of the soul becoming the principle of action, or that which co-operates with freedom in order to justification,—are all reduced by Goch to what he thinks the result of the whole doctrine of the Bible, and especially of Paul and Augustine, viz., that *grace* is that love which is infused by the Holy Spirit into the hearts of believers. For, he says, just as love consists in God's loving himself and us, and in causing us to love him and our neighbour, so grace consists in the same love, and the reason of its being called grace, is to teach us that we have in no way deserved it, but that it is imparted to us as a free gift from God. Accordingly grace is not a quality with which the soul is endowed in creation, any more than love; but it is God himself; it is the Holy Spirit deigning so to operate upon the will of man, as that he inclines to good and is delivered from the bondage of concupiscence. The first grace is operative. By it God manifests himself gracious to us, and makes us acceptable to him. The second is co-operative. By it he assists the will, and enables it successfully both to will and to do that which is good. Thus it is that God worketh all in all, for he works, first, the good will itself, and then its action. If in one place we read,[1] that we are justified by grace, and in another, that we are justified by faith, the object is to shew, that we must not suppose that faith of itself, that is faith without life,[2] can possibly justify, or any other faith but that which worketh by love. For grace is faith taking its mould in love.[3] It is therefore evident that grace is love, because even faith is nothing, and has no justifying power, without love.

The operation of grace[4] produces the *sanctified will*,[5] consisting in the supernatural movement of the mind, exempt from force and sin, to will and to do that which is supernaturally good. It is liberty as regards supernatural good, in the degree in which it is vouchsafed by God. For as, in the first creation, God implanted its natural power and liberty in the human will, so does he, in justification, impart to the will of the sinner its preternatural power and liberty, by virtue of which, it is emanci-

[1] Cap. 25. [2] fides informis. [3] fides formata. [4] Cap 26.
[5] voluntas gratuita.

pated from the fetters of concupiscence, and freely inclines to the love and practice of righteousness. This liberty of the renewed nature is, to be sure, not like that in the primæval state of innocence, a total emancipation from sin and all temptation to it, for sin still lingers in the flesh. At the same time the dominion of sin is broken, and it no longer injures the man who is dead in Christ, as it once injured him, when, though born in Adam, he was not yet born again in Christ. If in this view, however, primæval liberty was of a purer kind; on the other hand, that which is recovered by the believer is proportionally the more exalted; for by it the nature of the will is not merely released from the fetters of concupiscence, in which, by the sin of Adam, it was entangled, but it is even elevated to the liberty of the Divine love, which is of a far higher species than that of nature. In fact, by virtue of the first freedom, man really loved only himself, and what corresponded with or was required by his nature; whereas, by virtue of the second, he loves God more than himself, and loving him, resigns himself to his will. In like manner,[1] the power of the natural will consisted in exemption from constraint, and the possibility not to sin, whereas the power of the sanctified will consists in a capacity, though not to abstain from all sin, still to ascend to celestial and eternal things.

To sum up all,[2] there are two principles which regulate men's actions in this life, nature and grace. Nature is the principle of those actions which proceed from the innate powers of man, but which are insufficient of themselves to earn eternal life. Grace is the principle of the actions which are performed by preternatural power derived from God, and by which, man earns eternal life. Nature, even when healed by grace, is not for that reason converted into grace, but, even although raised above itself, continues to be nature still: just as a stone, when projected into the air, retains its natural qualities. Nature receives strength from on high, and is clothed upon by grace, but not transformed into it. As the sanctified will, however, is a gift of God, the whole justification and glorification of man are the work of free grace, without co-operation of the natural

[1] Cap. 28.

[2] Cap. 31.

power of the will, except that the will responds to the Divine influence exerted upon it.

Goch follows up this treatise upon the principles and motives of human action with a disquisition as to the matter of it, the *opposites of good and evil*, and the possibility of things *indifferent*[1] lying betwixt the two. Many teachers had maintained[2] that all the acts of the will, bad as well as good, have their foundation, in as far as they exist, in God, and are for that reason, in as far as they exist, good. It is necessary only to distinguish between the act of the will itself, and the sinfulness adhering to it. Even the evil act of the will is good as an existing thing, and only evil on account of the flaw attaching to it. Others had taught that the operation of the depraved will, like the depraved will itself, is always sinful, because it takes place without God; that what takes place without God is nonentity, or in other words, sin; and that sin may be called nonentity, not in respect that it is not wrong action, for even a wrong action is an entity, but in respect that it separates man from the true being, and misleads him to evil, which is nonentity. Others, moreover, had laid down the principle, that all acts of the will are indifferent, and in themselves neither good nor bad, but that they become either the one or the other, by reason of their cause, their object, and their aim. Rejecting all these assertions, and referring to Scripture, Goch deems it necessary to conceive the matter in the following form:[3] There are, he says, certain acts of the will so good that they never can be evil, such for instance as acts of love, for the act of love is always good. There are other acts of the will which are always evil, and never possibly can be good, such as the acts of concupiscence; although here we must recognise a difference of degrees. There are likewise acts which are both good and bad, according to their several aspects: Such for instance as the acts which are at one and the same time sins, and penalties for sin. For these, in as far as they are sins, and proceed from men, are evil, and in as far as they are penalties proceeding from God, are good. In fine, there are such as are neither good nor bad, but which derive the

[1] Cap. 32—42. [2] Cap. 32. [3] Cap. 33.

one or other quality from their cause and intention, and such actions are termed indifferent. The name is applied not merely to pure natural functions, such as eating, drinking, sleeping; but also to such actions as are not so good but that they may be perverted by a bad intention, nor yet so bad but that they may be turned into good by a good intention, such as feeding the hungry, or teaching the ignorant. In saying this, however, we have always in view that perfect goodness which involves some degree of desert, not the goodness which is the mere expression of nature, and is irrespective of God. Even wicked men sometimes do good things,[1] such as clothing the poor, and taking part in the Divine worship, but, as these things are not done with good intention, but without faith and love, they are not good; for without love all virtue is unprofitable, and he only does the will of God, who does it with inward acquiescence. There are, however, in the main, three kinds of good works which have not their worth in themselves, but derive it from their intention and aim.[2] In the first place, there are works of Divine worship, such as prayer, attending church, and paying vows. Then there are the works which man performs with a view to his own cleansing and sanctification, such as abstinence, fasting, voluntary poverty. In fine, there are the works which relate to the good of our neighbour, such as alms-giving, protecting the oppressed, and feeding the hungry. If in these the intention really points to God, they are good. If, however, they subserve a mere temporal and worldly purpose, and are done from hypocrisy and ostentation, then are they evil and deserving of condemnation. Nevertheless, if the main drift and ultimate aim of human actions point to God, and to fellowship with him as the chief and only satisfying good, then may they have other and subordinate aims, which yet do not render them objectionable, nor detract from their goodness,[3] provided the inferior ends are really subordinated to that which is supreme.

If by these disquisitions, Goch's chief intention was to lower the exaggerated estimate in which all ecclesiastical works, such

[1] Cap. 37. [2] Cap. 39. [3] Cap. 41.

as discipline and charitable deeds, were then held, to reduce them to a just standard, to lay the foundation for a sound Christian judgment respecting them, and thereby to prevent all pursuit of holiness by works (as, in point of fact, in the inferences which he proceeds to draw,[1] he specially instances entrance and reception into a monastery, as things which, according to the intention with which they are done, may be either good or bad, and may even amount to simony and heresy,[2]) he proceeds, with the same polemical tendency, to append, in the 3*d Book*, a Disquisition upon a kindred subject; viz., the *merit of human actions*. Here he has chiefly in view the *Pelagianism* of the theology of the Schoolmen, especially of *Thomas Aquinas* and his followers, and, while sharply combating him, he at the same time takes the opportunity, in connexion with the previous subject, of treating the central point of Christianity, viz., *redemption through Christ*.

Here too Goch sets out with a statement and refutation of the false doctrine, in order to place the right and canonical one in clearer contrast with it. He says,[3] with evident reference to the *Thomists*, Many theologians allege that *merit* is a human action or effort, to which a reward is due on the score of justice, and distinguish three kinds of it, viz., the merit of worthiness, the merit of congruity, and the merit of condignity.[4] The first they assign to a distinguished act of virtue performed with a strong fervour of love; the second, to an act of virtue performed voluntarily, but with a less degree of love; and the third, to a free act, prompted by love, and meriting eternal life, in consequence of the connexion established by Divine justice between merit and reward.[5] This doctrine is in many respects contradictory to canonical truth. The first error contained in it reminds us of the *Pelagian heresy*. For after all other heresies had been extirpated as perverse, that of Pelagius, relating chiefly to practice and behaviour, on which subjects the distinction between natural and supernatural is most difficult to draw, has maintained its ground with many teachers, and spread like a cancer. While

[1] Cap. 42. Conclus. 1—9. [2] Conclus. 9. [3] Book iii. cap. 1.
[4] meritum digni, congrui, condigni.
[5] The fullest exposition of Thomas' doctrine of Merit is contained in the *Summa*, Prima Secundae, Quaest. cxiv.

this heresy derives the merit, which entitles to eternal life, wholly from the natural ability of the will, and leaves nothing at all for grace to do, modern teachers (*semi-Pelagian*) assert, that Divine grace is also necessary for merit, but in so far err that, in place of ascribing it *solely* to grace, they allege that the will of man and the grace of God must *co-operate* for its production. This is the doctrine, to guard against which the Apostle Paul wrote almost all his epistles, especially that to the Romans, and the only wonder is, that men of piety and eminence like St Thomas should ever have embraced it. It involves essentially four errors. *The first*[1] of these consists in its averring that man's natural will must co-operate with the grace of God in order to his justification. The authority of St Paul rises in unanswerable opposition to such a doctrine, for that apostle teaches that we are justified freely by the grace of God, and that whom God hath fore-ordained, them he also called, and whom he has called, them has he also justified and glorified. No doubt he justifies them, with the concurrence of their own wills, that no one may suppose he can be justified against his will. But grace precedes man, in order that man may will, and follows the act of volition, that that may not be in vain. The *second error*, which results from the first, is,[2] that merit is an action to which reward is due on the score of justice. This error, which the Apostle Paul likewise combats, presupposes that the will's own act, which, considered in itself, is still an act of nature, can make God the debtor of man. But no mere act of nature can ever merit eternal salvation, which is something supernatural, and can be earned only by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Nothing good exists apart from the chief good. Where there is no recognition of eternal truth, there virtue is false, even though the morals are excellent. The *third error* is,[3] that merit receives a certain increase from the nature of the good work to which it belongs. And this is the ground on which St Thomas affirms, that there is more merit in performing a good work with a vow than without a vow, and that one kind of good work is better and more meritorious than another. But the doctrine is quite false, because no act, however good, has any

[1] Cap. 2. [2] Cap. 3. [3] Cap. 4.

meritorious goodness in itself, and derives its goodness solely from the sanctified will and intention. Besides, a vow cannot possibly confer merit on other actions, because it is not itself meritorious, unless it emanate from the sanctified will, and point to God as its ultimate aim. In that case, however, the merit does not flow from the vow, but from the sanctified will. Moreover, that no one description of good works is more noble than another, but rather that all genuine virtues stand upon a level, results from the unity of the cause which produces them, which is the plenitude of Divine grace, and which never bestows one virtue without another,—from the unity of the actuating principle,[1] which is love, and which either actuates all the virtues or none,—from the inward harmony of the several virtues,—and from the unity of their operation, which is especially evident in the theological virtues, for a man's hope is always commensurate with his faith, as his love also is with his hope, and the converse. Finally, the *fourth error* is,[2] that an action performed from love,[3] when weighed in the scale of justice, bears some proportion to eternal felicity. This the Scripture contradicts in numerous passages, especially the Apostle Paul in Romans iv., also Christ's parable in Luke xvii. By no actions, however, that may be performed, can man acquire merit to himself; for antecedently he is a debtor to God for all he can do. Hence it is that the Church, being founded upon faith in Christ, relies upon *his merits*, and believes and hopes for salvation from these. In fact he alone has procured for us deliverance, and justification, and glorification, that God may be praised in all. The true faith, by which we are incorporated with Christ, consists in believing that *our whole salvation is based upon his merits.*

This leads Goch to the positive statement of his views, in which, opposing four truths to the four errors above specified, he refers all to the *merit of the Saviour*, and more fully depicts the *saving work of Christ.*[4] He starts with what appears to him a more correct definition of the idea of *merit*,[5] to the effect, that it is an action of the sanctified will directed with right intention to God, and accepted by him, and to which, in the fulness of his

[1] formae informantis. [2] Cap. 6. [3] actus chartitate informatus.
[4] Cap. 7—13. [5] Cap. 7.

love and mercy, he has assigned the reward of eternal salvation. To constitute such a meritorious action, four things are required —First, that it be an act of the sanctified, as distinguished from the natural will; secondly, that this act be with right intention directed to God; thirdly, that it be accepted as meritorious by God; and fourthly, that it be a virtuous act of such a kind as to qualify for eternal salvation. All these Goch finds purely, perfectly, and originally *only in Christ*, and hence he represents all merit and all salvation, as procured through him. A fuller exposition of this is given in four propositions, or truths, as follows:—

First truth.—Merit can be earned only by a party who is absolutely free, and in other respects not bound and obliged.[2] But this can be said of no member of the human race, except that one, who is man indeed, but in such a way as to be also by nature, God. This sole freeman among mortals has offered himself in sacrifice for us, and through him God, who was in him, has reconciled the world to himself. Hence, it is not the merit of our works which makes us heirs of the kingdom of heaven, but the being spiritually born of God, and that Christ has merited for us by his death. The grace of Christ, from whose fulness we all receive, is the sole cause of all our merits. *The mode of our salvation*, however,[3] is described by the Apostle in Rom. v., where he says, that "As by the obedience of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." The sin of Adam was communicated to his posterity by propagation and imitation, and so likewise is the merit of Christ. The propagation of the holy will of Christ, by means of the spiritual birth from God, corresponds with the propagation of the inclination to sin by means of bodily birth; and the imitation of the first transgression by all the descendants of Adam, finds its counterpart in the imitation of the infinite love of Christ by the elect. In forming to ourselves a conception of the *redemption instituted by Christ*, we must not imagine, that there had existed any such enmity between God and man, as sometimes exists between two hostile individuals, for whose reconciliation it is necessary that, on both sides, friendship should be restored.

[1] Cap. 8. [2] obligatus. [3] Cap. 9.

No: The antithesis is that between righteousness and sin. Hence there is hatred only on the side of sin, and the moment sin is taken away, enmity also ceases. Christ accordingly has reconciled us to God, not as foe is reconciled to foe. The method rather is, that our sin, through which we manifested hostility to God, being abolished by Christ's death, we now begin to love him, whereas he never withdrew his love from us, but loved us from the foundation of the world, and even while we were his enemies. In this sense, God demonstrates his love to us by the death of his Son, that we, receiving such a pledge of his love, should, on our part, also be stirred up to love him. In this way the merit of Christ is transferred to us by the appropriation and imitation of his love. We are set free from sin and the Devil, and accepted as sons of God.

Second truth.[1]—No one can acquire merit in God's sight on the score of justice, unless his love be so great that he fulfils all righteousness *(is a sinless saint)*. There is, however, no such person among men, nor ever was, nor ever can be, save that one, who was man in such a way, as to be likewise by nature God. Excepting him, therefore, none can acquire merit on the score of justice. The first requisite for the fulfilment of all righteousness is, that a man shall be moved by no desire or lust, that is, by no temptation to sin. The second, that he shall exercise all love, that is, shall love God supremely and his neighbour as himself. This requires a corresponding power of will, which, in its turn, pre-supposes that we are acquainted with the essential parts of righteousness, and that what we know, fills us with a relish for it, which overcomes every hindrance. In this manner the fulfilment of all righteousness essentially requires two things. 1, A perfect knowledge of God, enlightening us as to all that pertains to complete righteousness. For it often happens, that, even when desirous to do the will of God, we do from ignorance that which displeases him, and if it be true that the fuller the insight, the greater also is the love, so inversely every defect of insight will render love defective, and every defect of love impair the practice of righteousness; for it is very possible to know and believe, that which yet we do not love, whereas nothing is loved, which is not

[1] Cap. 10.

known and believed.[1] 2. A perfect love of righteousness, by means of which the good, perfectly known as such, so highly delights the mind, as to vanquish all obstructions to it. It follows that no one can fulfil all righteousness, unless, while sojourning upon earth, he has already a complete vision of God, as was the case with Christ.[2] For although it is not impossible for God, in virtue of his sovereign power, to impart to a pure man all the strength requisite for the fulfilment of perfect righteousness, still the Scripture does not say of any, save Christ, that this either was or shall be done to him. Many things are possible which never did, and never will happen. Even the perfection of the Apostles does not pretend to purity from sin, and if such be the case with theirs, what are we to think of that of other men? Do not the most enlightened Fathers and potentates of the Church acknowledge that if we say: We have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and that there is no one who does not sin and need forgiveness?

Third truth.[3]—No one can acquire merit on the score of justice, to whom it has not been given of the Father. According to Scripture, however, it has been given to none except Christ. The first proposition is correct, because merit does not depend on human working but upon Divine acceptance; and nothing is acceptable to God, save that which he has willed, his will being the rule and measure of all goodness. The second is also correct, because the boon, if ever given to any, must have been given to John the Baptist, who, according to the testimony of Scripture, was the greatest among all those who have been born of woman. Even to him, however, it was not given, as appears from the fact that he did not walk in the full light of glory, but only in faith.

Fourth truth.[4]—No one shall receive the reward of eternal salvation who has not performed meritorious acts of virtue, when he had the means and opportunity. And yet no one, whatever degree of perfection he may possess, can merit eternal salvation by works, for that is allotted to virtuous acts only from the fulness of the grace of God. The proof of this is contained in many passages of Scripture, and may be stated as follows: In order that any one

[1] Cap. 11.
[2] nisi fuerit simul viator et comprehensor.
[3] Cap. 12.
[4] Cap. 13.

may merit eternal salvation, it is requisite that there shall be a perfectly equal proportion between the meritorious works which he performs and the reward which he is to receive. There is, however, no such proportion between human works and eternal salvation, partly because terrestrial love can never equal that which is heavenly, and partly because among men on earth there is no just one who doeth good and sinneth not. It is, therefore, necessary for all, save Christ alone, to obtain salvation and blessedness in the way of grace.

The doctrine of redemption through Christ naturally led to an exposition of the duties incumbent upon the subject of it, towards God, man, and himself, or, in other words, *to a delineation of the Gospel as a moral law.* This Goch treats in the *fourth Book* of his work, of which only a part is preserved. According to its title, indeed, this Book relates principally to *vows*, their effects and conditions. The chief thing, however, contained in the part that remains, is a discussion upon the nature of the Evangelical law, and as we shall have an opportunity elsewhere of learning what were Goch's views on the subject of vows, we shall here only advert to that general subject. He starts with the assertion, that vows are not mentioned in the New Testament nor in the infancy of the Church.[1] He also shows, however, that from the *nature of the Gospel law*,[2] they could not possibly be mentioned. That law is a *law of liberty*, and at the same time, of *love*. It excludes every kind of compulsion like that which a vow involves; otherwise contradictory things would be combined in one and the same law. It is further, however, a *law of the heart*, that is, it leaves an option to the will[3] which distinguishes it especially from the Mosaic Law, that having been a law of works, under which the will was in bondage.[4] For the New Testament, given not like the Old, merely to the House of Israel, but to all who are sons of Abraham in faith, and destined, when the time of the Old should have passed, to supply its place, is not written outwardly upon tables of stone, but inwardly upon the table of the heart, and is designed not to inspire terror or bridle the flesh, but to enlighten the mind, and by the free

[1] Book iv. cap. 1. [2] Cap. 3. [3] deliberativae voluntatis.
[4] voluntatis servitiae.

bond of affection, to unite the creature with his Creator, who is himself reconciled as Love. And if the new law is set down in writing, in the works of Evangelists and Apostles, still even this record of it, taken by itself, is merely the letter that killeth, and acquires its true significance, only when referred to the love shed abroad by the Spirit of God in our hearts, or, in other words, to the law which neither is nor can be written.[1] In fine, the essential *object of the Gospel Law*[2] is to *emancipate* man from all bondage and constraint, and to exalt him to the full liberty of the children of God, and, therefore, all that it requires of him is, with genuine and holy affection, to love God and his neighbour, as it is by this one thing, embracing every other, that he is delivered from coercion, and conducted to the glory of the children of God.

Such are Goch's *positive* doctrines; and certainly the reader, whose acquaintance with the Reformation is not confined to what is expressed by the current phrases of the scattering of darkness, and the restoration of light,—the reader, who knows its actual form and historical import, will hardly need to have his attention directed to the *reformatory* elements which these doctrines contain. Even although the article of justification by faith alone does not shine forth as the governing centre, in the same degree as was the case with the Reformers, still this is the only one of their peculiar characteristics which is wanting. There is the same conflict with the spurious philosophy of the Schoolmen, and all human authority, waged from the same stand-point of a lively faith in Scripture to which a sound exegesis had given birth. There is the same preference of the practical doctrines of salvation to the predominantly theoretic and speculative predelictions of the reigning theology. There is, in the whole treatment of Christianity, the same spirituality as opposed to the legal views of the Mediæval Church, and in connexion with this, the same estimate of morality, not by the mere external performance, but by the principle and disposition from which it proceeds. And in fine there is the same hostility,

[1] Cap. 5.

[2] Cap. 6.

which we find in the greatest theologians of the 16th century, to that excessive esteem in which the good works and disciplinary exercises, enjoined by the Church, were held. Neither is there wanting here and there, in the particular exposition of doctrines, that profound sense of human sinfulness, that strict exclusion of all merit, that pious recognition and exaltation of the grace of God procured by Jesus Christ, as the only fountain of all that is truly good and necessary for our welfare and salvation, and that firm conviction, that nature cannot heal itself, but requires an interposition of the supernatural, in order to its deliverance from the unnatural state of sin, and its thorough renovation, all of which specially mark the position of *Luther*. In like manner we have also the same deeply-penetrating and weighty distinction between Law and Gospel, between the service of works required by the former, and the spirit of love and liberty accompanying the latter, which constitutes the turning point in *Melanchthon's* expositions of doctrine. In short, we have all the positive rudiments of the Reformation, and where these exist we cannot but expect that the opposition will in many respects correspond with it. To that opposition we now pass.

PART THIRD.

GOCH IN OPPOSITION

TO THE

RELIGIOUS ABERRATIONS OF HIS AGE.

THE TREATISE ON THE FOUR ERRORS TOUCHING THE GOSPEL LAW.

The most striking feature in *Goch's controversial writings* is, that he did not, like his forerunners, and many, both of his co-temporaries and successors, direct his attention merely to single and superficial points, but, consonantly with the deeper impulses of his nature, took into view the action of the Church in its *full extent and inmost springs*. *Wickliffe* had assailed the mendicant monks, the usurpations of the Hierarchy, and the perversion of the doctrine of the sacraments. *Huss* had sketched the beau-ideal of the Church, of the Episcopacy, and of the Priesthood, and had held it up before a corrupt Hierarchy and clergy, that they might behold it and blush. It was chiefly against the corruptions of the clerical body, and the abuses of indulgence, that *John of Wesel* took the field. With the fiery eloquence of a prophet *Savonarola* attacked the moral degradation of all ranks, of the people and the nobility, both in the state and the Church; while *Erasmus* poured his pungent wit upon the stupidity and folly, the superstitions and abuses of his age. None of them all, however, penetrated so deeply into *the general spirit of the Church*, which was the basis of all the mischief, the root from which the unchristian or anti-christian tendencies grew, or depicted these tendencies with such precision as the silent, calm, and thoughtful *John of Goch*. Even in his opposition, he is more contemplative

than active; and for that reason also all the more penetrating and profound.

Of this we have a remarkable monument in the Treatise on *the four errors touching the Gospel Law*.[1] In the same way in which a celebrated teacher of the Church in modern times[2] supposes that there are four natural heresies on the subject of Christianity, Goch also recognizes four fundamental errors, which, from the first, have been injurious to it, and, especially in his day, operated destructively upon the Church. The structure of the disquisition in which Goch unfolds these views is as follows. It is composed in the lively form of a dialogue, and the conversation is carried on between the *Spirit*, as the higher power which instructs, and the *Soul*, as the inferior which receives the instruction. Christianity is conceived as a *Law*, a view of it, no doubt, resting partly upon a distinction drawn between the Gospel as a free evangelical commandment, and the false external legalism which had become dominant in the Church. At the same time it is connected with the whole *stand-point of the middle ages*, from which Christianity was viewed and treated as a restrictive, threatening, penal, and disciplinary *code*, the Old Testament element, in which it was historically rooted, raised to its former ascendancy, and from this spirit a priesthood, a legal Church-system, and even a Theology deduced, which, with an apparent liberty of argumentation, was yet substantially of an external, traditionary, positive, and legal character. In spite of this imperfect conception of Christianity, we still find Goch penetrating into the inmost essence and sanctuary of religious *liberty*, and thereby paving the way for the Reformation, the great object of which was to re-open that sanctuary to the nations, who had now attained to their majority.

In the *introduction*,[3] Goch intimates the occasion of the Treatise

[1] Dialogus de quatuor erroribus circa legem evangelicam exortis—printed in *Walch* Moniment. med. aev. vol. i. fasc. 4. p. 73—239. The title *De quatuor erroribus* was perhaps borrowed from the well-known work of Walter de St Victore, *Contra quatuor labyrinthos Galliae*, or at least contains an allusion to it.

[2] Schleiermacher in his Glaubenslehre Th. i. s. 137, § 22. The heresies are the Docetian, the Nazaræan, the Mannichæan, and the Pelagian.

[3] Dialog. p. 75—79.

by addressing it to certain friends, who had communicated to him, by letter, that many corrupters of Holy Scripture had gone so far in their perversity as to maintain, "That the liberty of the Gospel Law was, from the very commencement of the Church, confined within the obligation of vows, and limited by these, so that, without the obligation of a vow, the Gospel Law could not be perfectly kept." This error, although buried long ago, was now once more lifting its pestilent head, and Goch was invited by the brethren to disprove it from Scripture. Entering into the proposal, he guards himself against saying anything contrary to the decisions of the Church, or to the prejudice of truth, but being desirous in simplicity, and to the best of his insight and conscience, to instruct the brethren, and in order to be able to do this in a sound manner, he undertakes no more than "to draw from the fountain of canonical Scripture, the sole indisputable authority." In so doing, he requires that none of his readers shall find fault, if what he says contradict particular statements of the Fathers, for in such a case, he promises to evince by clear proofs "that they had either erred in interpreting Sacred Scripture, or had not expressed themselves with sufficient accuracy." At the same time, he also requires that whatever is demonstrated in this way to be true, shall be received with approbation, "Because," says Goch, "what a man says or writes is authentic, not because he who says it is great and honourable, but because what he says is true. For it is *Truth* alone which everywhere evinces its efficacy and invincible force, and gives authority to all speakers. I shall therefore have not merely to trace the footsteps of the Fathers who have gone before me, but either to find out a middle way between them, when they disagree, or to oppose and refute their statements by sounder arguments. This may not be agreeable to all, still no one ought to treat with contempt what is done from love of truth."

At the *commencement of the dialogue*,[1] the *Soul* observes, that both the dignity conferred upon her in creation, and the great love manifested in her redemption, clearly show, that she was intended by her Maker for something great, and connects with this observation a desire to know by what way and means she may, with the

[1] Dialog. p. 79—82.

greatest degree of certainty, reach her exalted destination. The *Spirit* replies, and allows that it is doubtless a very great, and indeed the chief good, for which the Soul was destined; but that in the destination of the Creator, his wisdom is to be admired no less than his goodness, because, while he made the Soul with a capacity for the supreme and uncreated good, he had associated her with a body of clay, thus combining in her the extremes of dignity and meanness; and that his object in this was that the Soul might be constantly mindful of her origin, and feel the value of the blessings of the Creator enhanced by the sense of her vileness. It is proper that the Soul should aspire, with all zeal, after the chief good, but for this, the thing above all else indispensably necessary is the light of discretion. For the attainment of that light, however, it is not requisite to explain the aberrations of all, even of such as have cast off every restraint. It is sufficient to know the essential errors of those, who, although owning subjection to the Gospel Law, contravene in various ways the true Christian life. There are four kinds of errors, which from the outset have obscured the Gospel Law, and greatly disturbed the peace of Christians.

These *injurious tendencies* are then characterized by Goch as 1. Unevangelical legality, 2. Lawless liberty, 3. False confidence in self, and 4. Self-devised, outward piety. Nor is he content with merely exposing the errors, but in every case confronts them with the truth. Thus to legality is opposed Evangelical freedom; to free-thinking, that respect for law which leads to self-control; to carnal confidence in self, a deep sense of the need of grace; and to a Christianity of inventions and forms, its primitive and inward spirit of freedom. More or less also he expressly mentions the historical manifestations of the erroneous opinions, in his own and the immediately preceding times. For instance, on the subject of spurious legality and self-righteousness, he refers to Pelagianism, Thomism, and Monachism; and on the subject of free-thinking, (so at least it appears to me) to the Pantheists, the Fanatics, and Antinomian parties of the age, who had found champions and proselytes even in the Netherlands. In this manner, the Treatise is calculated to furnish us with an excellent thread in our enquiries, on the one hand, into the corruptions of Christian life as manifested in a variety of forms, and, on the other,

into the remedial and purifying agencies of which many, in a true spirit of reform, already felt the necessity.

CHAPTER FIRST.

LEGALISM OR THE JUDAISING TENDENCY, AND GOSPEL LIBERTY.

The fundamental distinction between Judaism and Christianity is, that the one is *Law* and letter, the other is *Gospel* and spirit. The nature of Law consists in its being something enacted, in other words, outwardly imposed and entirely positive, which, as a commanding and threatening power, sets itself in opposition to man. Whereas the nature of the Gospel consists in its being the announcement and offer of the Divine grace practically manifested, the effect of which is to implant in man a new spirit of life, by whose virtue, and from an instinctive impulse of liberty, he, as a free agent, fulfils the Divine will. It consists in kindling in man a love which, spontaneously and without any external commandment, leads to the fulfilling of the Law. The Gospel inscribes the Law upon the heart, and thereby the Law ceases to be Law by becoming Spirit. Both states, the Legal and Evangelical, rest upon essentially different principles, and are in so far opposite to each other; at the same time they mutually imply each other, because the Legal prepares for the Evangelical, and the Evangelical results historically from the Legal, and in so far the two are inseparably connected. In consequence of this inward connexion, manifested historically in the economy of the Old and New Testament, the element of the legal frame of mind had been largely transplanted into the sphere of the Gospel, and hence we find from the outset, and through the whole course of the Christian Church, *the traces left by a Legal kind of Religion.* First of all we meet with Judaised Christianity in its milder and ruder form. Even, however, after this had been absorbed in the sect of the Nazarenes and Ebionites,

legalism was far from being abolished in the Church; it only manifested itself in new shapes and combinations. Small parties here and there still exhibited a strong legal hue, as, for example, the Hypsistarians of early Christianity and the Passagians of the middle ages. The last observed the whole Mosaic Law, and even bound themselves to its observance by circumcision (hence called *circumcisi*). Even into the great Christian body, however, the legal spirit penetrated in an ever increasing degree. We find traces of it in many of the Fathers, especially those of the Greek Church, who all embraced some philosophical system. By them the way was opened for Pelagianism, which treated Christianity, as Socinianism and Rationalism afterwards but still more recklessly did, conceiving it to be mainly a doctrine of virtue, a refined law, little more in fact than a moral directory for salvation. Pelagianism and Semipelagianism subsequently, in the course of the middle ages, gave birth to other corruptions of the truth. Nay, during this period, and owing to the conflux of the most heterogeneous influences, the legal views gained the complete ascendancy. In our quarter of the world, where Christianity was now making its greatests conquests, there were powerful but rude nations to be trained; and Christianity was the sole effectual means by which this could be done. But as the nations were not sufficiently ripe to embrace the Gospel in its spirituality and freedom, it lowered itself to them, and, in the hands of the priesthood, once more became *Law*, in order to pave the way for a deeper and purer conception of its real nature in a future age. In this manner, about the time the Prophet of Mecca propagated his Law, Christianity had become thoroughly legalized, and had relapsed into the Old Testament form. The Pope was the great pedagogue of the European family of nations, the Church, a rigid schoolmistress, the priests, the executioners of the Law, the monks, the patrons of its observance, and the saints, its loftiest exemplars, having more than fulfilled its utmost requirements. As the basis of the whole system, an Ecclesiastical legislation was developed, more organized and comprehensive than even the civil law. So general and all-pervading indeed did the Legal conception of Christianity become, that we find it, although perhaps in a milder form, among the sects who set themselves in opposition to the dominant Church,

as, *e.g.*, the Waldenses. Relatively this state of matters may be considered beneficial and necessary; still it was but a chrysalis state, from which Christianity required to emerge, in order freely to expand its celestial pinions, and the thorough regeneration of the free from the legalised Gospel was the Reformation. Before, however, this crisis, could arrive, it was requisite that there should be minds to pave the way for more correct views, and such, in an eminent degree, was John of Goch. He says on the subject with brevity and force:[1] "The first error is chargeable upon those who contend that with the Gospel Law, bequeathed by Christ to his followers in a few precepts and sacraments, it is necessary, for the attainment of salvation, to conjoin the burdensome servitude of the Law of Moses. They appeal to the saying of the Saviour: 'I am not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfil;' believing these words to signify that it is indispensable for every one so to keep the more perfect precepts of the Gospel Law, as not to neglect the less perfect of the Law of Moses. But the Apostle Paul, in those Epistles of profound wisdom which he wrote to the Romans and Galatians, refutes this error with arguments of such unanswerable force as to exclude all doubt. For he shews that the observance of the *Gospel* Law not only suffices, but is the only thing that does suffice, for the highest perfection of the Christian life; whereas the observance of the Mosaic Law, although obligatory while it lasted, so far from promoting that great end, is, on the contrary, very disadvantageous for it. To this effect, he says to the Galatians: 'I, Paul, say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. Whosoever of you are justified by the Law, ye are fallen from grace; for we through the spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.'"[1]

In opposition to outward legality Goch everywhere insists on inward *disposition*. No outward works, however strict, can satisfy him, and as he supposes that evil already exists, even though there be only the resolution to commit it in the mind, so does he acknowledge as good nothing which does not come from a sanctified will directed towards God, or that is not done in *faith*

[1] Dialog. p. 83 and 84. [2] Galat. v. 3—6.

working by *love*, or, in a word, in *love* itself. He everywhere opposes liberty to bondage and servitude, and in the *liberty*, which is the inseparable concomitant, and even the offspring, of love, he recognizes the imperishable spirit of Christianity, that spirit whose source and prototype is Christ himself. With this spirituality, however, he at the same time combines that truly Christian gentleness usually foreign to the stern and exclusive rigour of the legal stand-point. On this subject he very forcibly says:[1] "Many in the Church of God are led, by a variety of motives, to the exercises of the Christian life, and everywhere appear to manifest a great ardour of love, do great, and tell strange things, and promise still greater and stranger, and, if others do not display the same fervour and impetuosity, accuse them of coldness. Hence ensues an intolerable rigour in outward customs and ceremonies, and a total want of love towards weaker brethren. They pursue indefatigably the inclinations of their heart, fondly embrace the traditions of men, but are found to omit the weightier matters of the Law. To them applies what the Lord said of the Scribes and Pharisees, viz., that they were hypocrites, and blind leaders of the blind. If we penetrate more deeply into their hearts, we discover that, though they seem in men's eyes to be great, they are not actuated by the zeal of the Spirit of God, but instigated by their own passions. What they do has a show of spirituality, but, there can be no doubt, it has been suggested by flesh and blood. To guard against this evil, he who seeks to do good should be admonished to seek also to do it in a good way."

[1] Dialog. cap. 6. p. 99 sqq.

CHAPTER SECOND.

FREE THINKING DISREGARD OF LAW, AND THE RIGHT AND LAWFUL LIBERTY OF THE GOSPEL.

When we say that, to conceive and handle Christianity as if it were a Law, was the prevailing tendency of the Mediæval period, we must not be understood to mean, that this was either absolutely dominant or exclusive; on the contrary, we find a twofold exception. On the one hand, we meet with men of great intellects, and deep souls, who, even under the existing circumstances, became so inwardly imbued with the essence of Christianity, that either wholly, or to a great extent, it ceased for them to wear the temporal form of legalism. This was especially the case with many warm-hearted Schoolmen, such as Anselm of Canterbury, and with the nobler class of Mystics, such as St Bernard, Hugo de St Victore, and Bonaventura. Besides, the prevailing Nomianism called forth another extreme, viz., decided *Antinomianism*, or *free thinking*, which overlooked the amount of Law involved in the nature of the case, and which is the condition of all true liberty, viz., self-restraint. The rudiments of this tendency may likewise be discovered in a great variety of forms from the very infancy of the Church. The carnal and fanatical men, who abused or perverted the doctrine of Paul, were, even in the days of the Apostles, treading this path. By certain Gnostic sects the views were digested into a regular system. We have to mention in particular the Marcionites, Carpocratians, and Kainites, and in general all the Gnostics who were decidedly opposed to Judaism. But, as is well known, a thread of Gnosticism also runs out into the middle ages, and here an *element of Pantheism* which fermented powerfully, and in the process overflowed upon the people, became associated with Phantasticism. Stirred up probably by the more speculative and deliberate Pantheism of the great Scotus Erigina, there arose in the course of the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, certain Pantheists who departed farther and farther from Deism, and the historical foundation of Christianity,

and at the same time operated powerfully upon the popular mind. We here speak of David of Dinanto, Amalrich of Bena, and Eckard,[1] who formed, or at least occasioned the formation of, parties and associations among the people for the adoption of these opinions. Such were the Brother-and-Sisterhoods of the Free Spirit, as they were called, and the enthusiasts among the Beghards and Beguines. These sects, setting out with the principle of the natural identity of the Divine and human spirit, and adhering to the proposition that God worketh all in all, averred that every act of a godly man is good, and, regarding the true life as seated only in the spirit and the heart, pronounced the outward action, even in the case of a mortal sin, to be wholly indifferent. A doctrine like this could not but produce the most baneful effects among the people by whom its deeper meaning was not understood. And hence sensible and truly Christian men were imperatively called upon to insist, not only upon liberty, but along with it, upon *obedience to law* and *self-control.* In the ranks of those who did so we find the subject of our memoir. He designates as the second fundamental error[2] the doctrine of those who make the perfection of Christian life to consist in faith alone (spirit and disposition of mind), and reckon works of faith to be unnecessary, so that they suppose, if they but believe in Christ and possess the gift of faith, *all other things are lawful* to them. To this error, which appealed to the saying of Jesus Christ: "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved," Goch opposes in the first place the authority of the Apostle Paul, to wit, Gal. v. 13: "Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." Relying upon this statement Goch explains the matter as follows: "When the Apostle says: Ye have been called unto liberty, he shews them the benefit of faith infused by the grace of Christ into the hearts of believers; for it is love alone which induces men to believe in Christ, by liberating the affection of the heart from all created objects, and by giving it, when liberated, its freedom in God. When the Apostle, however, further adds: 'Only use not liberty

[1] On this remarkable man see the beautiful treatise of Dr Schmidt in the Stud. und Krit. 1839. Heft 3. s. 663.

[2] Dialog. p. 84 sqq.

as an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another,' he shews equally how works of virtue should proceed from faith. 'By love serve one another,' comprehends two things, the inward movement of the will, and the outward performance of the work. To love in the spirit is the movement of the will, to serve another is the performance of the outward work. Love sets the will in motion, and the will, when moved, acts by means of the animal spirits, upon the members of the body, and causes them to perform the outward work. Hence it follows, that, when it has the opportunity of proceeding to the outward work, the will, though actuated by love, does not of itself suffice for the perfection of the Christian life. Whereas, when there is no such opportunity, then must the will, being moved by love, stand for the deed." Accordingly Goch distinguishes[1] a twofold act of the will as requisite for the perfection of the Christian life, one inward, and springing immediately from the will itself, the pure act of faith working by love,[2] by which the soul is assimilated and rendered acceptable to God; and the other required by law and external, which has no doubt an inward basis, but which at the same time depends upon other conditions,[3] and makes a man not only pleasing to God, but, for the Divine honour, exemplary to others. This act of faith (which is just the practical principle manifesting itself in life) is no less indispensable for the perfection of the will, in every case in which there is the possibility of carrying its inward movement into outward effect; where this, however, is wanting, the good will is accepted for the deed.

But, proceeds Goch,[4] In proof of the indifference of the external performance, and of the exclusive value of the interior act of faith for the perfection of the Christian life, some may appeal to the doctrine of the Apostle Paul, who asserts, that all of us, as sinners, come short of the glory of God, and that we are justified by faith alone *without the works of the Law* a text, which seems to lay the whole weight solely upon the interior act of faith. In respect of this doctrine of free grace, however, the main effect of which ought to be to humble the pride of man in the sight of

[1] Dialog. p. 86. sqq.
[2] the fides formata in and of itself.
[3] actus fidei formatae exterior.
[4] Dialog. p. 88—90.

God, it ought, as Goch pertinently observes, to be well considered, First, that the Apostle does indeed say, A man is justified without *the works of the Law*, but he by no means says, without *the works of faith*: And next, that as the Scripture contains contradictions only for superficial readers, but to all who penetrate more deeply into its meaning, constitutes a harmonious whole, other passages ought to be taken to implement the sense. Now, several texts in his Epistles, both to the Romans and to the Galatians, evidently prove, that it is not the Apostle's design to exclude the works of faith from the perfection of the Christian life; but that, while teaching that man is saved gratuitously, and without the works of the Law, he acknowledges at the same time, how necessary the works of faith are, if there be any possibility of performing them. For how could he require of us, To do good and not be weary, if the inward movement of faith alone sufficed? To will that which is good, is one thing, and to do it is another. By the inward movement of faith, we *will* and *choose* that which is good; by the outward performance of the work, we *do* it. It is accordingly clear that to the perfection of the Christian life, provided the conditions exist, both acts, the inward and the outward, belong. This has, indeed, been declared by Him who is the truth itself, for He says: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

It has, indeed, been alleged, that John of Goch may *himself* have partaken the erroneous views of the *Free Spirit*.[1] Such an allegation, however, could only be founded upon the facts, that he strenuously advocates Evangelical freedom in opposition to Legality, and that in his time, and in the district where he laboured, abettors of the errors of this sect made their appearance. Neither reason, however, is conclusive. Let us beware of separating single sayings of Goch from the connexion in which they stand, and let us take him all in all, as he shows himself, particularly in the section before us, and it will be evident that he speaks as decidedly *against false as in favour of true liberty*; for whereas the former section was levelled against a legalism

[1] Walchii Praefat. ad monim. med. aev. vol. ii. fasc. 1. p. xxiv.

that was not free, so the one before us is clearly pointed against a spurious Spiritualizing, and an Idealistic Antinomianism. It is probable that Goch may have found occasion in his neighbourhood to express his views. Such an occurrence, however, was more likely to induce a man such as his whole style of sentiment shows him to have been, to express himself with decision against, than in any way whatever to adopt them.

CHAPTER THIRD.

FALSE CONFIDENCE IN SELF, AND THE NEED OF GRACE.

The erroneous tendencies which we have hitherto shown to have been controverted by Goch, are chiefly *objective*, and rest upon a misunderstanding of what Christianity essentially is, inasmuch as they overlook either the inward liberty of spirit, which it imparts, or the obedience to law, and respect for morality of life, which it involves. There are, however, and from the first have been, wrong tendencies of a more *subjective* nature, which place man in a false position towards Christianity, as a thing which he ought to appropriate and introduce into life. In so doing, he may either from want of a sufficiently profound acquaintance with God and himself, keep wholly aloof from God in the work of sanctification, and relying upon his own spiritual strength, consider *Divine grace as unnecessary*, or, even though he may not actually reject it, may yet cherish the supposition, that in order to attain to true perfection of life, he likewise and above all things requires an *outward support*, an Ecclesiastical *obligation*, or *vow*, or some such appliance. The former is the error of *Pelagianism*, the latter is described by Goch as the error of the *Thomists*, and of outward *Monachism*, which is intimately connected with Pelagianism. It was at the same time the fundamental error of his age, because not only the whole Monastic system, but all the institutions of outward vows and obligations in the Church, were based upon it. We have to consider both tendencies, along with

Goch's objections to them, first singly, and then in their inward and historical connexion.

First, as regards *Pelagianism*, its gradual growth, especially after the time of Origen, in the Greek Church, the distinct traces of it impressed by its author and his friends upon the Western, and its continued operation in both, although generally under a mitigated form, are sufficiently known. We intend here to direct particular attention solely to the manner in which the Pelagian principle affected even the orthodoxy of the Church during the Mediæval period, and thereby produced extensive and by no means desirable consequences. We shall shew this in the instance of the most influential of the Schoolmen, whom in all his controversy Goch has chiefly in his eye.

So thoroughly did Pelagianism pervade the whole Church, that even that theologian, who, among all the founders of the Scholastic system, evinces the most decided adherence to Augustine, viz., *Thomas Aquinas*, did not escape its infection. This appears in the radical views he entertained on human nature, and the method of salvation, of which we shall here offer a concise summary. It is matter of notoriety, that in the conflict between Augustine and Pelagius, all depended upon the ideas they respectively formed of sin and of grace. Augustine considers sin as something which, in consequence of the fall of our first parents, has acquired the ascendancy in the whole of their descendants, and he conceives the sinful state, which is the foundation of all actual transgression, in other words, original sin, as something positive, as sensual desire (*concupiscentia*) resisting that which is good. This positive conception of hereditary sinfulness had since the time of *Anselm* fallen into the shade, and original sin, had come to be represented as essentially negative, as the want of original righteousness (*defectus justitiae originalis* or *justitiae debitae nuditas*). *Thomas*, whose main endeavour in his theology was to collect and reconcile the different statements of preceding teachers, adopted both views into his conception of original sin,[1] and taught, that it consists, substantially, in sensual desire, and the consequent disordered or perverse state

[1] He treats of original sin in the Summa prim. sec. Quaest. lxxxi. sqq.

of the natural powers, and formally, in the want of original righteousness. In the development of his idea, however, he stated much that considerably abated the rigour of the Augustinian doctrine. To him original sin is an infirmity, a feebleness of nature *(languor naturae)*.[1] It affects principally the will, and in a less degree, the intellectual faculties.[2] The higher natural endowments are not in general destroyed by it, but merely impaired. The state of original righteousness and acceptability to God is all that is done away; whereas those powers and faculties, which properly constitute human nature, have remained uninjured. Even the natural inclination to that which is good is lessened indeed, but by no means annihilated;[3] for just as little as man, in consequence of sin, could cease to be rational, so little could the goodness of nature which pertains to man, as a rational being, or in other words, his natural bent to virtue, be destroyed by sin.[4] Original sin is therefore a wound inflicted upon nature, a diseased and discordant state of it, *(vulneratio naturae)*[5] which has been induced by sin, rather than a thorough and positive destruction of it in the sense of Augustine. With this conception of sinfulness, the idea formed by *Thomas* of grace and its operations naturally required to correspond.[6] As original sin has its seat less in the intellectual than in the moral powers, and as, in spite of his sinfulness, man continues a being naturally rational, and intelligent, he is competent of himself to recognize natural truths, even without the higher gift of grace, but to will and to do that which is right, to raise himself from sin to goodness, to be free from sin, to love God supremely, and to merit eternal life,—these are things which in the sinful state, affecting as that mainly does the will, are not in man's power without the help of Divine grace, and of this grace he indispensably requires supplies, through the whole course of his sanctification. At the same time, this is done, in

[1] Quaest. lxxxii. Art. 1.
[2] Quaest. lxxxiii. Art. 3.
[3] . . . . Aliud denique, cujusmodi est ipsa naturalis inclinatio ad virtutem, sublatum quidem non est, verum valde diminuitur per peccatum. Quaest. lxxxiv. Art. 1.
[4] Ibid. Art. 2.
[5] Ibid. Art. 3.
[6] Summa Theol. prim. sec. Quaest. cix. sqq.

the exercise of man's liberty, and in so far, he is commanded to convert himself to God. It lies with himself to prepare his mind, because this is done by free will, though, at the same time, not without the help of God, who moves and attracts him to himself. In this manner conversion and sanctification appear as the mutual co-operation of grace and liberty. Inasmuch then as free agency on the part of man is exercised in conversion, there accrues to him some degree of moral merit.[1] It is true that Thomas expressly refers all human merit to the grace of God,[2] as its chief and final cause; but inasmuch as grace acts through free will, this free agency, actuated by grace, has relatively the character of meritoriousness ascribed to it. Man, says he,[3] has the power of meriting something from God, not so much in virtue of the absolute perfection of his righteousness, as by virtue of a Divine appointment, in respect that he obtains as the reward of his working that which God has given him strength to work for. All that is good in man always proceeds from God, and in this sense it is, and not by virtue of his own, but by virtue of a Divinely wrought righteousness, that he can stand before Him. Inasmuch, however, as man does by his own free will what it is his duty to do, a merit likewise accrues to him, only there is no equality between the merit that arises from what God works and that which flows from what man wills. The merit, of which the operations of Divine grace lay the basis in man, and which properly earns for him salvation, is a merit of worth or condignity *(meritum ex condigno* or *condigni)*; that, however, which is connected with the free agency of the will in man, is only a merit of fitness *(meritum ex congruo* or *congrui.)*[4] In the former case, God crowns his own work; in the latter, he reckons it proper to reward, according to the immensity of his goodness, what man does in virtue of the strength vouchsafed to him.[5] By the merit of condignity or worthiness, Christ alone, the perfectly righteous being, was competent to earn grace for others. By the merit of congruity, however, this may be done

[1] On this point, see Summa Theol. prim. sec. Quaest. cxiv.
[2] Quaest. cxiv. Art. 2.
[3] Ibid. Art. 1. [4] Ibid. Art. 3.
[5] Videtur congruum, ut homini operanti secundum suam virtutem Deus recompenset secundum excellentiam suae virtutis.

by one man for another;[1] for inasmuch as he who standeth in grace executes the will of God, it is meet and answerable to the friendly relation between them, that God should, on his part, carry into execution the will, which is pointed to the salvation of others.

It is true that this theory of *St Thomas* appears to retain the leading idea of Augustine in the proposition, that all good comes from God, and is the offspring of His grace, and that thereby the Pelagian notion of the merit of human virtue is in a great degree circumscribed, or cast into the shade. At the same time, the conception formed of what is moral is, so to speak, more one of quantity, than of quality, while it introduces into the creed the idea of human merit in the sight of God. As on the one hand, however, this idea is unevangelical, so, on the other, it became the point to which, by inevitable consequence, all sorts of corruptions, in the doctrine and Ecclesiastical system of the Mediæval period, fastened. In fact, it formed the basis upon which the errors on the subject of good works, their merit, and even supererogatory merit, the treasure of them possessed by the Church, and the indulgences derived from it, were all substantially founded. For this reason, as the Reformation in a doctrinal point of view may be designated a fundamental and thorough confutation of the principle of Pelagius, and consequently a restitution, in all its strictness, of the contrary principle of Paul on the subject of free grace, conjoined with a deeper apprehension of the real nature of the moral sentiment, it follows, that an essential preparative for the Reformation was to wage controversy with the Pelagian opinions in all their forms, and smooth the way for those deeper views which look less to the degrees of good and evil, and more to the inward disposition of mind from which they spring. And this is precisely what we find in Goch. It is the sense of the following delineation which he gives of the nature of the fourth error: "It is maintained," he says, "by those who, considering the inward act of volition, and the outward one of performance, as both necessary to the perfection of the Christian life, nevertheless do not blush to assert, that the natural powers of the free will, or the innate capabilities of human nature, are perfectly sufficient for

[1] Quaest. cxiv. Art. 6.

them, without the aid of Divine grace. Such was the Pelagian error which, although rejected by the Church and disproved by many texts of Scripture, is found to send forth various rank shoots in the minds of many, who do not ascribe the practice of virtue to Divine grace *alone*, but trust more than is right to the innate ability of man." Against these views also, Goch appeals first to the testimony of the Apostle Paul, as one who had learned from experience that human nature, though originally destined for the highest felicity, yet, by reason of its immeasurable distance, cannot reach that height, unless some means be employed for elevating it from its debasement to its lofty and glorious destination, and this means is called *grace*. If this, however, be true of nature, even in her state of integrity, it is true of it much more in the state of corruption, and manifold entanglement with sin. At the same time, Goch does not here confine himself to the authority of the Apostle, but seeks to evince the truth of the fact by intrinsic reasons, and in his exposition brings forward the following thoughts.[1] There are two chief powers which perform the highest mental operations, and these are the intellect and the will. It is known, that every power of the soul has its own proper object, by which it is induced to exercise its peculiar action, and by acting on which it is perfected. The proper object of the intellect is the highest truth, just as that of the will is the chief good. Inasmuch, however, as no power is brought into activity by its object, unless it be influenced by it (*informatur*); and as no power can be influenced by its object, unless the object is apprehended by the power, just as sight is not rendered active except by the perception of colour, nor hearing except by the perception of sound; and in fine, inasmuch as the power cannot apprehend the object, unless that be proportional to its capacity of apprehension, it follows, that even the essential powers of the soul, if they are to exercise their appropriate functions, must be influenced by their peculiar objects, and that for this end, there must be a *corresponding relation between the powers, and their objects*. Between the reason, however, and its object, which is the highest truth and the chief good, such a relation does not exist; for the object here is of an infinite compass, whereas the natural facul-

[1] Dialog. p. 93. sqq.

ties of the intellect and the will are finite and circumscribed. The finite is manifestly insufficient for the infinite, nor can any natural faculty rise above itself, for no agent can exceed the limits of its innate principle of action. It is clear, therefore, that the chief powers of the soul cannot, of their own ability, perfect themselves in their proper action, but must be qualified for this by the accession of another infinite power, and this we call the assistance of *grace*.[1]

The same fundamental thought, which is true, although it overlooks the fact that there is an infinity also in the mind, and that this requires the matter to be more deeply conceived, is brought forward by Goch in another way. He says,[2] "As the yearning of the mind must depart from and rise above itself, in order to unite with God in love, so also must the intellect of man ascend above itself in order to attain to the knowledge of Him. Neither of the two faculties, however, can, in the strength of its own proper bent and motion, go beyond the bounds of its nature, because nothing is greater and stronger than itself; and, therefore, if either of them is to reach its highest and ultimate exercise, which is of a supernatural order, it must derive some other assistance from without, and that is *grace*."

In fine, Goch illustrates the matter by the following propositions,[3] which at the same time speak for his strict *supernaturalism*, as contrasted with the rationalistic speculation of the Schoolmen. "The will of the Christian stands in a necessary relation to that which he ought to do, as does his understanding to that which he ought to believe. The will is under obligations to keep the Divine laws, even against its own inclination and natural desire; but because the natural bias of the will is to keep nature as it is, the observance of the Divine commandments consists in forsaking nature, and if it be enjoined, in even devoting it to destruc-

[1] Elsewhere (Epist. Apolog. p. 21) Goch expresses the same thing with great precision, "As that which is black cannot by means of blackness become white, nor that which is cold, by coldness, warm, but as the black object must put off the quality of blackness in order to become white, so must mere obligation be removed from works of virtue, if these are to be reckoned among the works of the children of God which are freely done."

[2] Dialog. p. 95.

[3] Dialog. p. 95—9.

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tion, as was shown in the case of the martyrs. The task of the intellect is to assent to the revelations made by God respecting articles of faith, even when contrary to the natural apprehension of the reason. Inasmuch, however, as to believe the articles of faith necessary for salvation, is not done by the natural apprehension of the intellect, seeing that the intellect can believe nothing supernaturally, but can only apprehend those objects whose truth is evinced with evidence or probability from rational grounds, a thing which, as to many of the articles of faith, cannot be done, it is evident that the intellect needs to obtain other helps for the performance of this saving act, and so it does. The light of faith is vouchsafed to it, or, in other words, the aid of grace. The result of all accordingly is, that the natural capacity of man, although competent for natural functions,[1] is yet, without the help of grace, altogether incompetent for those supernatural acts, which render the soul meet for the life of eternal blessedness.

To this exposition, which, conformably to the plan of the dialogue, proceeds from the higher principle, that is the *Spirit*, the *Soul* raises the following objection[2]:—Inasmuch as God, who is the Creator of all things and the contriver of nature, has made nothing in vain; so, neither can any of nature's movements and tendencies be vain. If, however, the aspiration of the mind be, by its own natural movement, directed to the chief good, as being its proper object, and yet it be asserted that it cannot of itself attain to the apprehension of this object, is not this asserting that there is something natural, which is vain and nugatory? For to aspire after an object and yet not to be able to attain it, what is that but to labour in vain? Unless, therefore, we characterize the natural movement as in itself nugatory, we must inevitably affirm that nature is competent, of her own ability, to compass the object towards which she naturally aspires. The Spirit, recognising in this objection a proof of the continued operation of the Pelagian error, proceeds with its instruction as follows:[3] "There are many persons in the Church of God who, with a

[1] The justitia civilis, as the Augsburg confession expresses it, in contrast with the justitia spiritualis.

[2] Dialog. p. 97 and 98.

[3] Dialog. p. 99—108.

deep interest, and an apparently strong and ardent zeal, endeavour after that which is good. With the most scrupulous exactness also, they perform whatever is prescribed to them. Here, however, the great task is not merely to do what is good, but *to do it well.* Man's natural ability is sufficient to do many good things, but the opinion that it also suffices to do them well[1] is an aberration from the purity of the Christian faith. Of this we have a proof in the Epistle to the Galatians, when the Apostle says, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;" as if he said, The virtuous actions which prove the life of grace to be in me, I perform, not in the strength of nature and in as far as I am a man, but in the strength of the grace which Jesus Christ ministers to me, as one of the members of his body. I do not live as one actuated by the motions of nature. But Christ lives in me, and by the power of his spirit incites me to the service he has ordained. The truth of the text, however, will be self-evident to the man who rises above the flesh and contemplates things in the light of God, who is truth. The whole appetence of the intellect, whether it be natural or supernatural, tends to conjunction with that which is its origin, viz. God; because in Him alone it finds its rest and consummation. This conjunction, however, does not consist in their being locally approximated to each other. It is rather the concord of two appetences,[2] the Divine and the rational, each conformed as much as possible to the other; for, as God does not descend from heaven, in respect of his unchangeable essence, but in respect merely of what he communicates, and of the influence of the goodness emanating from him, so the rational spirit does not rise above itself to union with God by change of local position, but by virtue of its conformity with him;[3] and hence the more it resembles God, the more it becomes united to him, and the more unlike him it becomes, the more it is separated from him. All things are moved by their weight. The weight of the soul, however, is love, for the soul tends to the object to which it is drawn by love. The nature of love, however, is to steal the loving party from himself, and translate him into the

[1] The justitia spiritualis.
[2] duorum appetituum.
[3] Per habitum deiformem.

object of his love;[1] and the effect of this translation is, that the loving party assumes the form of the beloved. Hence the ground of the resemblance which unites the soul to God, and of the dissimilarity which separates it from Him, is to be sought in the appetence (desire or aspiration) of its intellect.[2] And here we find the point of right discrimination. For, continues the Spirit,[3] appetence (*appetitus*) is excited in various ways, and by these we may distinguish the different kinds of love. It proceeds either from a natural, or from a psychical, or from a rational impulse. The natural is a consequence of the disposition of natural qualities, such as the desire for rest in the state of weariness. The psychical is the consequence of the perceptions of sense, such as the desire of looking upon a beautiful object. The rational is the consequence of a free judgment of the understanding, and of a free choice of the will on the part of the subject, and it is of the last that we speak. It is wont to move the soul with a twofold love, corresponding with the two kinds of it which form the soul's gravity; for within thee, there is the nature imparted in creation, in virtue of which thou hast a weight of natural love, and by means of it art raised aloft to the Supreme good. But within thee there is also grace superadded to nature, by the lovingkindness of thy Saviour, and hence a weight of Divine love by means of which thou forsakest, and art raised above thyself, and, in total self-oblivion, absorbed into the Divine good pleasure. These two kinds of love, as they both attract us to the highest good, are often confounded with each other, so that acts which proceed from the one are ascribed to the other. It is clear, however, that nature, so long as it cleaves to itself, and is the object of its own love, cannot grow more like to God, nor be drawn nearer to Him. For if nature be enamoured of herself, she can never possibly be ameliorated by the mere transmutation of herself into herself;[4] and in vain efforts of this sort many wear themselves away. The criterion

[1] In amatum transferre.

[2] The appetitus rationalis.

[3] Dialog. p. 104.

[4] Quia enim appetitus pondere amoris in amatum transfertur, si tunc natura est ipsum amatum, in quod appetitus appetentis transfertur, manifestum est, naturam ex translatione sui ipsius in se ipsam non meliorari, ac per hoc Deo similiorem, quam prius fuerat, non fieri.

of true love is to be found in the effect which it produces. For as the nature of love is to steal the lover from himself, and to transfer or transmute him into the beloved, we see its nature from its prints. Hence he who loves the flesh becomes carnal; he who loves nature, natural; and he who loves God, Divine, by being conformed to his image. Whenever, therefore, the aspiration of the soul ascends upwards to the chief good, attention ought to be paid to the object which it is conscious of seeking. For if a man seek the chief good, because it is good, useful, and in many ways pleasant to himself, it is clear that he is seeking it more as a merchant than as a lover. If, however, his aspiration is set in motion by the gravity of the Divine love, —if it goes beyond, and rises above self and nature, and in total self-oblivion dissolves in God, who is its object, so that, careless of its own advantage or delight, it seeks only the will, glory, and pleasure of its object, even at the expense of its own disgrace,— then it is love of the sort which takes on the Divine form, and approximates to the Divine likeness; and this is true love, for only true love leads the lover in all things to seek the pleasure of the beloved object, and to desire nothing but to be loved in return. It is also manifest, however, how foreign this is, and how superior, to any work done by man, and in the hope of meriting the Divine acceptance. For in performing such works, a man does not rise above himself. On the contrary, true love is its own reward, finds its satisfaction in itself, seeks nothing else and nothing more; And this love (such is the virtual, although unexpressed result of all that has been said), is not the offspring of nature, which it far transcends, but emanates from Divine *grace*, which raises a man above himself, and invests him with the Divine nature and strength. For only when a man is attracted by God, and receives his form from Him, can he be transformed into Him, and become like Him, or, to express it in the words Goch uses in a subsequent passage[1]: "Because all goodness is essentially in God, and none in the creature, except by participation, and because goodness is not produced in any subject by participation, unless the essential Good, by the free operation of its infinitely gracious will, offer itself to be participated in, it

[1] Dialog. p. 122—24.

follows, that there can be no movement of love in the created will which has not been kindled there by the love of the Creator. For as iron or wood cannot burn, unless they are first ignited themselves, so neither can the created will exercise the act of loving until it has been kindled by the love of God, as is clearly taught by the Apostle John: 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins.' It is from this Divine love that reciprocal love is produced, and rises in still increasing degrees till the consummation of the life of bliss. For that consists in a continual and never ending influx of the Divine goodness into the created will, and in a continual and never ending reflux of the created will to God in the fulness of love."

CHAPTER FOURTH.

FACTITIOUS AND GENUINE CHRISTIANITY.

With the Pelagianism and semi-Pelagianism transferred so largely into the system of the Schoolmen, *Monachism*, especially in its later stage of growth, was strictly and intimately connected. Both were based upon the principle of the meritoriousness of human actions in the sight of God, and upon the idea, more or less coarsely conceived, of *self-righteousness* and *righteousness by works*; and if it was the doctrine of Pelagianism respecting Christians in general, that they required to merit their salvation from the Divine justice, by moral worth and virtuous deeds, Monachism only went a step further, under the persuasion that, by a stricter practice of virtue, and a more specific engagement to it, a higher degree of holiness and of saving merit might be attained, nay, that it was possible to achieve *a superabundance of it*, which might be transferred to the account of others. This view, however, though essentially connected with the general legal tendency of the middle ages, was not held uniformly by all the Monastic orders, or by all the members of any one. Even in the domain

of Monachisn, we find a more profound and more purely Christian conception of the matter. In particular, a somewhat general difference, or rather opposition on the subject, seems to have obtained between the *Dominicans* and the *Augustinians*. The *Dominican order* had taken its rise in a decided contradiction to the prevailing heresy of the 12th century. Indeed its main object was to impugn and extirpate it. The heretical parties of that and the following age, however, advocated predominantly the principle of religious sentiment, and an evangelical frame of mind, and hence the Dominican order necessarily sank more and more into the principle of outward observance and legality which prevailed in the Romish Church. This, accordingly, is the position which we find them occupying in the course of the 15th century, and the small number of honourable exceptions among the preaching Monks, especially those imbued with a deeper mysticism, such for example as Tauler, count for little against the whole spirit of the order. In general we find among them a stiff resistance to all progress, a firm adherence to the received forms of doctrine and to Ecclesiastical use and wont ; And possessing, as they did, the most influential places both in the Church and Universities, and above all, having the Inquisition at their disposal, they enforced their principles with dreadful violence against all who differed in opinion from themselves, especially the advocates of change. Wherever any symptoms of life, liberty, or aspiration above the common appeared, as for example, in the instances of John of Wesel, Reuchlin, and subsequently Luther himself, we see the Dominicans engaged most zealously in opposition. Certain localities, however, were in a particular manner the seats of their spirit, as for instance, *Cologne* in Germany, which thereby became a fortress of obscurantism against all the efforts of progress. On the other hand, we find in the *Augustinian order*, and in the canonical life akin to it, a deeper and more heartfelt piety, imbued with the spirit of its honoured and much read patron Saint, that mighty defender of the doctrine of grace, the principle of faith, and, as the fruit of it, of the spirituality of the Christian life, against all and every species of righteousness by works. Less entangled with the interests of the dominant Ecclesiastical system, they lived principally for calm contemplation, and the sanctification of their own souls, and cultivated, by a sort of

traditionary right, a gentler and more spiritual Christian mind. We have vouchers for this, in the canon *Thomas à Kempis*, and the two celebrated Augustinians *Staupitz* and *Luther*. In particular the letters of Luther in the early period of his life, breathing as they do a deep sense of religious want, and an earnest evangelical spirit, manifest that, in this respect, there were, within the ranks of his order, and in various quarters of Germany, not a few who shared his sentiments. To this tendency, which spread also to the Netherlands, and there led to the institution of the more unfettered association of the Brethren of the Common Lot, *John of Goch* belonged. He was Superior of the Canonesses of St Augustine, and in so far connected with the order. At the same time, he exercised the utmost independance of mind in forming his opinion respecting the worth of the Monastic life, its obligations and exercises, and hence we also find in him another instance of hostile opposition to the Orders and their views. Often, and especially in the work which expressly treats the subject, he had defended the principle of evangelical freedom. A *Dominican*, however, with whom we are otherwise unacquainted, had taken the field in reply, and against him, as we have already said, Goch wrote a special *Apologetic Epistle*.[1] But

[1] This *Apologetic Epistle*, declarans quid de Scholasticorum scriptis et religiosorum votis et obligationibus sit censendum et tenendum, is printed in *Walch* Monim. med. aev. vol. ii. fasc. 1 p. 1—24. It was occasioned by an unknown (Walch's preface p. xviii.) *Preacher Monk*, who had written against the liberty of the Christian religion, and, as is probable, specially against Goch, either with reference to his Treatise upon the Four errors, or to his work on Christian liberty, or to both (Walch in al. l. p. xix.) together. The Epistle, of whose literary merits we shall afterwards speak, was, in all likelihood, the last production of Goch's pen. It is founded entirely upon his former works, contains nothing substantially new, and merely furnishes us with a proof that he continued stedfast in his convictions till the close of his life. As it makes no addition to our knowledge respecting him, a short statement of its contents, and a few citations from it, may here suffice. The whole occupies only twenty-four pages, and is divided into two parts: The first, p. 1—14, treats of Scripture, the source of our knowledge of the true Christian faith, and of its relation to the statements of later teachers; the second, p. 14—24, treats of the principle of Christian liberty. The first, in the manner already known to us as Goch's, combats the pretensions of theologians and philosophers, in as far as they claim an independent authority, settles the exclusive authority of canonical truth, and shows its inward harmony, in the instance

even in his work upon the four errors, and towards the close of

of several of the authors of the Bible. It rejects with peculiar vehemence *Aristotle*, with his accomplices (*cum suis complicibus*), and St Thomas, of the latter of whom the very commencement thus speaks. "Who then is this Thomas Aquinas, whose writings, even though founded on mere philosophic reasons, we are to believe in contradiction to canonical truth? Is he not frequently contradicted over the whole Church? Are not his writings refuted with solid arguments by many teachers of the greatest celebrity and highest rank, and sometimes indignantly derided? Is it not the opinion of many that they diverge so far from sound doctrine, as not even to be worth refutation." The second part, founding upon Scripture, especially upon Paul, and also James, then shows the opponent, who seems, like all Dominicans, to have gone very far in defending the principle of Monastic rigour and legalism, that the Gospel law from the very first was established upon the freedom of the mind, and had never been properly observed by any one, except in the exercise of such freedom. All theologians, it is here said, both ancient and modern, agree in asserting that human actions possess merit or guilt, only in as far as they are voluntary. So that nothing is esteemed good or bad unless it be freely done. A man may, therefore, bind himself by a thousand vows to do what is good, and yet no desert will ever arise from such an obligation, unless the good to which he binds himself is done with freedom of mind. That the evangelical law can only be rightly observed in freedom, may also be inferred (Epist. apol. p. 19. 20) from the fact, that it is a law of love. No one can love unless his will be free. Love is a thing which you cannot possibly force a man to do, although you may possibly force him to exercise abstinence, or to renounce his property, or to obey rules. It is the offspring of the will and of grace, and these are the most free of all principles of action; for whatever is done from love, cannot but be freely done. Whoever would fulfil the Gospel law, must of necessity love. "But how shall the constraint of obligation be converted into freedom? Black cannot be changed by black into white; and cold cannot be changed by cold into hot; but black must divest itself of blackness, in order to become white, and even so must constraint be done away from the works of virtue, if they are to be reckoned among the works of the children of God, which are performed with freedom" (Epist. apolog. p. 21). The works of faith are not for that reason all good works, but only such of them as are done from love, for only in these does faith show itself to be living. A man might perform works of abstinence for a hundred years, in the strength of a vow, but not from love, or with a view to come nearer to God, and yet these would neither demonstrate his faith to be living, nor yet help to perfect it. On the contrary, it would still be justly reckoned dead and inefficacious (Epist. apolog. p. 22). Abraham pleased God, not because he was willing to perform the outward act of sacrificing his son, but because, in obedience to the Divine command, he conformed in all respects to the Divine will. For as the will of God is the rule and measure of all that is good in the will of the creature, the goodness of the latter is recognized by the degree in which

it, he had expressed his views. He designates[1] as the *fourth radical error* the opinion of those, who reckon the twofold act of faith, both that of inward volition and that of outward operation, as essential to the perfection of the Christian life, but, at the same time, presumptuously maintain, that to execute the *more perfect works* of the Gospel law, the liberty of the spirit, inwardly influenced by faith, is insufficient, and that the *obligation of a vow is likewise indispensable*, so that, reducing Evangelical freedom to an obligatory servitude, they are not far removed from *Pharisaical* superstition," and he then adds: "This is the *error of our age*, and it coincides in many respects with the Pelagian heresy. For the Pelagian heresy absurdly affirms, that grace is not requisite for the virtuous works which lead to eternal life, the natural power of the will being quite sufficient for them of itself; while, if we carefully examine the error, we will find that, although avowing the necessity of grace for such works, it is nevertheless wedded to the notion, that grace is *not, in and of itself, sufficient for them.* For to say that, without the obligation of a vow, the precepts of the Gospel, in their highest perfection, cannot be observed, is to say in substance, although in different words, that the grace of the Evangelical law is not, in and of itself, sufficient for that end." These few words distinctly show the *connexion of Monachism* and of the whole Ecclesiastical *system of vows and obligations* with the principle of *Pelagianism.* No less pertinent, however, are Goch's observations at large upon this fourth error, and it is here, especially, that he displays in perfec-

it corresponds with the former. Obedience is not that action of the will, in virtue of which, it controls the other powers of the soul and members of the body, but it is the action which the will, under the impulse of grace, produces from itself, and in virtue of which, it is wholly resolved into the good pleasure of God, both with reference to the object and with reference to the manner of the volition. He who does that which is commanded in a mere outward manner, but without the inward assent of the will, only *appears* to obey, but does not in reality perform the work of obedience. This depends wholly on the free acquiescence of the will. He who does that which is commanded, against his will, exhibits only a picture of virtue, not virtue itself. (Epist. apolog. p. 23. 24.) All of this, however, shows that under the evangelical law nothing acceptable to God can be done except in the strength of that liberty of love with which Christ has made us free. (Ibid. p. 24.)

[1] Dialog. p. 109.

tion that logical skill, which is always more or less at his command.

Inasmuch as *Thomas Aquinas*, the main representative of the mediæval theology, is here chiefly in view, it will be requisite to give a concise summary of his doctrine, on the subject of *vows*, the foundation on which Monachism is built.[1] He defines a vow to be a kind of promise, by which a person, qualified by age and other circumstances, engages of his own free motion to perform to God some eminently good work[2] which is wholly in the power of his will. According to *Thomas*, a vow is an act of worship[3] implying the highest degree of obligation, not merely on account of the promise made to the Divine Majesty, but for the sake of the great advantages which it brings. Its effect is to give to certain good works a higher importance and greater merit with God, than they would otherwise possess. To the completeness of a vow, three things are necessary, viz., consideration, a purpose of the will, and an actual promise, by which it is consummated. The very nature of a vow, however, involves that it shall always relate to some work of special excellence,[4] as all things generally necessary for salvation are. Every vow points ultimately to God, and determines respecting such matters as are to be done to his honour and in obedience to his commands, and in so far it is an act of worship and religion. This applies also to the vows which are made directly to the Saints or to Ecclesiastical superiors; for in such cases the party comes under an engagement to God, that he will fulfil what he has promised to the Saints or to the prelates. Inasmuch, however, as a vow is an act of worship, that which is done in consequence of it, is more commendable and meritorious,[5] than that which is done without it.[6] It may indeed seem, says Thomas, that the reverse is the case, because whoever acts without a vow is in a less degree under constraint, the act, which is the subject of the vow, being often

[1] Thomas treats of this subject in the Summa Theol. Sec. sec. Quaest. lxxxviii. in 12 Articles.

[2] aliquod excellens bonum.

[3] latriae actus.

[4] a melius bonum, as Thomas often designates it.

[5] laudabilius et magis meritorium.

[6] This is the main question, and is discussed by *Thomas*, especially in the 4th Article of the 88th Quaestio.

performed with a depressed and sorrowful mind, and because the vow has no peculiar power to strengthen the will. When more closely weighed, however, this is not the case. Rather does it appear, that there are three respects in which it is better and more meritorious to do a work in consequence of a vow, than to do it otherwise: 1st, Because a vow is an act of Divine worship, and as such stands at the head of the moral virtues. An act of a higher order of virtue, however, is always better and more meritorious than that of a lower. In this sense, fasting or abstinence acquires a superior worth by its connexion with a vow, because, under this assumption, it pertains to the worship of God, and is a sort of sacrifice offered to him. 2d, Because he who vows to do a thing and does it on that account, subjects himself to God in a greater degree than he who does the same thing without a vow. For he subjects himself to God, not merely in respect of the action, but in respect also of his liberty to perform it, seeing that after the vow, it is no longer in his option to act otherwise. Finally—Because the effect of a vow is steadfastly to confirm the will in that which is good; but to do a thing from a will confirmed in what is good pertains to the very perfection of virtue, just as in the opposite case sinning from a hardened mind is an aggravation of the sin.

To this whole statement of the doctrine of *vows*, and of the *Pelagian* views upon which, in his conviction, it was founded, Goch opposes the following dilemma:[1] "A vow is either an act of nature or an act of grace. If it be an act of nature, caused by the natural bent of the will to good in general, it follows that grace is not of itself sufficient for the perfect observance of the Gospel law, for if it were, no act of nature would require to be superadded. If, however, it be said, that a vow is an act of grace, produced by an inclination of the will to good in a more special sense, in so far as the will is moved thereto by grace, it again becomes a question, whether this motion of grace is necessarily required to the completeness of the vow or not. If it be not necessarily required, it may then be inferred, that a vow may be sound and complete without grace, and that is falling once more into the old error. If on the contrary grace is neces-

[1] Dialog. p. 110–113.

sarily required for it, this is to admit that a vow, made without the movement of grace, is not a right and perfect vow. If, however, it be not right neither is it obligatory, and if it be not obligatory, he who makes, cannot be bound to perform it, and yet every monk is compelled by the Church to observe his vow, while it is clear that many of them have in no degree been moved by grace to take it upon them and engage in the monastic life, but by the most unworthy motives. Nevertheless the Church looks upon their vows as good and valid, and merely subjects them to a stricter discipline, or to penance in another monastery. It is therefore evident that, (in the view of our opponents) the motion of grace is not necessarily required for the soundness and completeness of a vow. Admitting, however, what they declare to be their doctrine, that grace is necessary, and that the will of the party making it is by this grace confirmed in that which is good, as the author of the error[1] openly maintains, then another question emerges, to wit, Inasmuch as grace is related to the will in the same way as light is to the object on which it shines, and must therefore put something into the will, just as light puts something into the illuminated object,—further, inasmuch as that which grace puts into the will is nothing else but a certain conformity of the will of man to the will of God,—and inasmuch as, finally, this conformity daily grows by increase of grace, until the susceptibility of the will is heightened to the utmost, so that it becomes worthy to hear that word of truth, "enter into the joy of thy Lord," having reached the highest pinnacle of love, and being wholly transformed into the beloved object,—all this being the case,

[1] Inasmuch as *Thomas* teaches generally that nothing good is done by man, not even that which he performs in the exercise of a free agency, without the impulse and operation of grace (v. Summa Theol. P. ii. 1. Quæst. 109, where, among other things, it is said, Liberum arbitrium ad Deum converti non potest, nisi Deo ipsum ad se convertente . . . . nihil homo potest facere nisi a Deo moveatur ; et ideo, cum dicitur homo facere, quod in se est, dicitur hoc esse in potestate hominis, secundum quod est motus a Deo), he must necessarily also maintain that the higher good which is wrought by means of a vow, although proceeding from free will (dicitur enim aliquis proprio voto facere quae *voluntarie* facit. Sec. sec. Quaest. ix.—xxviii. Art 1), is yet at the same time an operation of grace, which strengthens and confirms the will in this higher good.

how can grace, by means of a vow proceeding from it, ever possibly put into the will of him who takes it, more than it puts into the will of him who, without a vow, and in the exercise of Gospel liberty, gives himself up, according to the perfection of the Gospel, to serve the Lord all the days of his life? Opponents will answer, A vow puts into the will of him who makes it a steadfastness in that which is good, such as is not in the will of him who does not make it, appealing to the words of their master,[1] who says, "The will of the party who vows is thereby strengthened in that which is good, and is to a certain degree assimilated to the confirmed state of the blessed." But that this argument is unsound we may certainly convince ourselves.[2] If any such confirmation actually took place, it would behove to be, either the confirmation of the predestinated, or that of the sanctified, or that of the blessed, for there is no other kind of confirmation but these. But in the first place, it cannot be the confirmation of the predestinated, for this excludes, if not the possibility of sinning, yet the possibility of a total lapse and final perseverance in sin, seeing that the ultimate purpose of God cannot be frustrated. A vow, however, imparts no such confirmation; on the contrary, the most distinguished doctors openly affirm, that many who have taken the monastic vow will be subjected to damnation, and no man of sound mind will venture to affirm, that all monks will be saved. Just as little can we ascribe to parties taking a vow such a confirmation of the will in what is good, as is found in the sanctified. For this would presuppose an indissoluble union of the human will with the will of God, in consequence of the continual presence of the Divine grace. Such, however, is not the necessary effect of a vow, for monks can very easily fall from virtue and become most abandoned sinners, a fact which needs no proof, because the life of many of them is so manifestly

[1] *Thomas Aquinas*, who is here also meant, says in his Summa Sec. sec. Quaest. lxxxviii. Art. 4, Ad primum ergo dicendum, quod sicut non posse peccare non diminuit libertatem, ita etiam necessitas firmatæ voluntatis in bonum non diminuit libertatem, ut patet in Deo et in beatis. *Et talis est necessitas voti, similitudinem quandam habens cum confirmatione beatorum.*

[2] Dialog. p. 114—124.

detestable, that it is proverbially said, "What a monk ventures to do the devil himself would blush to conceive." Least of all, however, do we find, in those who take vows, the stability of the blessed, for their condition involves the impossibility of sinning, in consequence of the presence of the chief good, with which the capacity of their will is so completely filled, and its desire so perfectly satisfied, that it can never possibly be diverted from it. No one, however, will affirm that this is the case with monks who, daily, and in all manner of ways, commit sin and indulge in the embraces of harlots, more than in spiritual enjoyments and Divine delights, a fact too obvious to need any proof. It is, accordingly, evident, that a vow confers no special stability in what is good, that might not equally be ensured without it, by him who, of the free motion of grace, daily consecrates himself to the service of God; nay more, that in general a vow does not at all promote advancement in what is good, and does so only perhaps in particular cases, just as chains and bonds may sometimes be serviceable to one who is infirm.

The *Soul*, starting with another saying of *Aquinas*,[1] objects to this argumentation, that the compulsion of a vow may *facilitate* religious acts to man, in the same way, for instance, as the Jewish people were driven by threats and terrors to the observance of the law, whereas he who is absolutely free finds it more difficult to persevere in what is good. To this, the *Spirit* answers, and most justly, that that is not *genuine good* which is done in such a way,[2] because genuine good can only proceed from liberty, and liberty receive its direction only from love. "It is clear,"[3] he says, "that they, whom it is necessary to compel, do not love the good which they have promised to do; for only that which is done from love is voluntary in the highest sense. Neither can any man, by such an obligation, assimilate himself in a higher degree to God, for, as God does nothing by outward compulsion, but all by the free determination of his will, and as that which forms the distinction between the rational creature and all others is, that his acts are not subjected to necessity, it is manifest that the actions of men are all the more conformable to those of God, the more they are the result of

[1] In the Summa contra gentiles.
[2] Dialog. p. 118—122. [3] Dialog. p. 120 and 121.

liberty. Yea, even grace does not destroy the natural freedom of the will, but perfects it, and, by means of love, resolves it into a higher freedom, for as the love which it imparts to the will is greater and stronger than that which is the offspring of nature, in the same measure also is the liberty which is the offspring of grace superior to that of nature. What emanates from love is in the highest degree free."

This amounted substantially to a refutation of the opponents, but as he had here to do with the fundamental error of his age, Goch traces it in all its roots and ramifications, and as he takes the opportunity to say much that is weighty in a *Reformatory* view, we shall accompany him a little further. The *Soul* subsequently starts[1] the objection, that, even as respects the ordinary profession of the Christian religion, there is an obligatory vow in *Baptism*, which the Church not only permits to be made, but likewise holds every one bound to fulfil. The *Spirit*[2] answers, and draws a distinction between the *Baptismal* and the *Monastic vow*. The vow of faith at baptism is essential to salvation, as the observance of the commandments also is during life. Christ requires that we shall confess him before men, and the Apostle designates, as a constituent of the faith that saves, not only the assent of the heart, but the confession of the mouth. But, whatever is necessarily required of us, the grace of the Lawgiver also gives ability to do. Hence it comes to pass, that the freedom of the will, as it is not lessened by the obligation to the law of the Gospel, so neither does it suffer any diminution by the vow of faith, which ought to be absolutely voluntary. At the same time the vow of faith in Baptism is a testimony of the spiritual communion and friendship of the baptized party with the Church; for there can be no better sign of an inviolably holy connexion, than such an irrevocable vow. That vow pertains also to the nature of the Sacrament,[3] for the Sacraments are distinctive marks, by which, not only in the hidden judgment of God, but even in the public judgment of the Church, believers are separated from unbelievers. In order to this, however, it is requisite that there shall be an inward sus-

[1] Dialog. p. 152. [2] Ibid. p. 153 sqq.
[3] Dialog. p. 156.

ceptibility of mind for the reception of grace, and also an external confession of the mouth. In Baptism, in fact, these are requisite in a higher measure than in the other Sacraments, because it is the one which first incorporates the party with the Church. Now all this, shewing the Baptismal vow to be advantageous and necessary, is not applicable to the Monastic vow, and hence it is evident, that the two are essentially distinct, and if to the Baptismal vow there be annexed the promise, that to them who receive Christ, power is given to become the Children of God, it is difficult to see how any promise of higher perfection can be connected with the Monastic vow. For supposing that that did confer any degree of perfection, it would necessarily have the effect of harmonizing the human will more completely with the Divine, in which, in fact, the whole supernatural perfection of the soul consists. That this, however, is not the case we have already shewn. The Spirit further distinguishes[1] in a vow two things, the oblation and the obligation *(oblatio et obligatio)* of the will to that which is good. The oblation of the will consists in the act by which, under the influence of faith, and of its own free choice, it devotes itself to the performance of virtuous actions, and this is not essentially different from the volition *(volitio)* of good itself. Such oblation, however, proceeding, as it always does, from the impulse of grace, is to be found in no will which is not, and in every will which is, actuated by grace. It is, therefore, nothing special in the will of him who makes the vow, but is common to every truly virtuous will. The obligation of the will, however, consists in its binding itself, of its own accord, by a promise or vow, to do such and such an action. In such a case, as the obligation can be undertaken equally by a sinner and a virtuous person, no motion of grace takes place, but merely a determination of the will and the understanding, and consequently no higher perfection is imparted to the will of the obligant, as the matter belongs only to the jurisdiction of the Church, which does not judge of things hidden.[2]

All this is essentially *hostile to vows*, shewing, as it does, in

[1] Dialog. c. 13. p. 159—161.
[2] De occultis non judicat ecclesia.

every aspect, that they are unnecessary for the perfection of the Christian life, and contribute nothing supplemental to what is, of itself and in general, good. Inasmuch, however, as the public opinion and moral judgment of the whole Christian world, during the middle age, rested on the supposition of the superior perfection of the Monastic life, and the peculiar excellence of monkish virtue, and, moreover, as the Monastic life had its ultimate and binding foundation in the vow, and what the vow imparted, this controversy was of great and far-reaching consequence. It might appear, indeed, as if in waging it, Goch was in contradiction to *himself* as well as to the *Church;* to himself, as being the Superior of a monastic institution, and to the Church, which had instituted, or at least sanctioned, Monachism and vows. He was obliged, therefore, while denying their necessity, to admit, that in the whole system, there was something at least relatively good and profitable. It behoved him to shew, that he did not attack Monachism itself, but only the error, superstition, and corruption connected with it; and this he does, expressing himself on the subject of the relation of Monachism and vows to the *Church*, and on the conduct of the Church in many of its outward ordinances in a very remarkable way. "The *Church*," he says,[1] "is the *mother* of believers. In *mothers*, however, *abundance of affection* is more frequent than *strength of intellect*,[2] and hence in some acts of the Church we may observe more fervour of piety than light of discretion. Thus it is that the Church militant, just because she is militant, *may sometimes err in insight*, but she never errs in affection, for there can be no doubt, that whatever she ordains for her children, she labours to regulate with motherly love. And so it is with the *Monastic vow*, which, although it may not be calculated to confirm the will in that which is good, may yet afford the opportunity of doing it, for, just as many things are forbidden, not because they are themselves bad, but because they may possibly give rise to that which is so, so likewise have many things been ordained, not because they are of themselves absolutely good, but because they may furnish to many the occasion

[1] Dialog. c. 14. p. 164 and 165.

[2] In matribus autem plus solet abundare affectus, quam vigere intellectus.

of something better. Thus the silence enjoined upon monks is not an absolute good, or better than the opposite. On the contrary, to speak profitably, at the right time, and in the right place, is better than in such circumstances to be silent; and yet silence has been carefully imposed upon monks, because it may be the occasion of much good. For the same reason has the Monastic vow been ordained by the Church, not as if it were a great good in itself,[1] but because there are many weak and neglectful persons to whom it may become the occasion of something better. Even so the Saviour said, 'Compel them to come in, that my house may be filled,' not that by means of forcible constraint his Church might be furnished with good members, but that something good, which cannot be otherwise than voluntary, might be produced by the compulsion." This idea is further developed by Goch in the ensuing meditations.[2] The will, that gives itself up to a carnal freedom, must sometimes be forcibly restrained from the works of the flesh, by depriving it of the opportunity of committing them. No doubt this does not transform the will, but it may give it occasion to change its bias, as for instance was the case with the prodigal son. Just, then, as the Divine goodness does not, by the visitation of adversity, force the perverse will to that which is good, but seeks, by the pressure, to elicit a voluntary good from it, so does the Church impose upon monks the obligation of their vows, not so much to compel them to do good, as rather thereby to draw from them a good that is spontaneous. This is said, not to underrate the ordinance of the Church, but only to obviate error and superstitious pride. For as one thing is salutary for the sick, and another for the whole, one thing for the weak and another for the strong, so has our Mother the Church, making the exigencies of individuals her own,[3] studied to provide all with incentives to piety. With this view, she has ordained the Monastic vow for the weak and

[1] Yea, he who does good only under the spur of a vow, from fear of punishment and without love, rather commits sin. Dialog. cap. 22. p. 229, Religiosus faciens actus voti sui, ad quos se obligavit ex timore poenae, transgressoribus oppositæ, nullo eum adjuvante amore justitiæ, peccat.

[2] Dialog. cap. 15, p. 165—171.

[3] Singulorum necessitates in se transformans.

unstable, who could not, by means of ordinary institutions, be brought to the perfect observance of the Gospel law, that they might be accustomed by an outward obligation to live under the yoke of Gospel freedom. It is, therefore, a very great mistake in many monks, who, seeking to exalt their order, do not blush, although to their own disgrace, to call it *a state of perfection*. Much rather, monks belong to the class to whom the saying of the Saviour applied, "Compel them to come in." They are the unsettled vagrants of the highways,[1] mentioned in the parable, who have, no doubt, a certain willingness to be Christians, but are driven and tossed about by the inconstant gusts of their inclinations, and without some outward check on these, would neither persevere in the good they have, nor yet advance to a better. On such characters, the Monastic vow is profitably imposed, because it is the only means of restraining them from forbidden things.

The *monks* are therefore not in the *state of perfection*, as was the prevailing opinion of the whole mediæval period, for true perfection and genuine goodness rest solely upon the freedom which is the offspring of love. On the contrary, they are rather the *imperfect*, the weak and unstable, who need some outward impulse or spur to do what is good, and the *Church* has devised the bond of a vow, not as if she deemed it necessary to implement or perfect the evangelical law, which is sufficient of itself, but, like a tender mother, moved by condescension to the infirm. This leads Goch to draw a distinction between the *positive ordinances of the Church, and those of God*, with reference to the Christian life, and on this subject he says,[2] The Divine ordinances and constitutions are absolutely sufficient for the highest and most perfect observance of the Gospel law, and require no addition. For this reason, the positive constitutions of the Church, which have been superadded to these, are nothing more than certain external and decent observances, introduced as promoting a greater reverence either in the participation or administration of the Sacraments, such, for instance, as to partake of the supper with an empty stomach, and to perform the marriage service in face of the Church, things which do not add to the truth, but

[1] vagi et inconstantes. [2] Dialog. cap. 17. p. 177—182.

merely to the dignity of the Sacrament. To the same class belongs the Monastic vow, which, therefore, does not reach into the inner sphere of the will, but is essentially an outward act like other ecclesiastical institutions. Hence also it can produce no good of a higher kind in the will, as all such good must have an inward source, and cannot proceed from an external work. The Thomists admit, on the one hand, that the order of a prelate does not reach to the inward movement of the will, but only to the matter of the outward act; and, on the other, they also maintain, that the Pope can dispense with any Monastic vow however sacred, which obviously infers, that even in their opinion, such a vow is to be classed with the positive and external institutions of the Church. When, however, they at the same time say that a vow can be the basis of merit, and that meritorious acts of virtue may proceed from it, this is nothing else but saying, that eternal salvation may be earned by outward actions, and without the aid of grace. It is in point of fact affirming the absurd doctrine of Pelagius, that the will, by its natural ability, and without the assistance of grace, is sufficient to merit eternal blessedness, and from that doctrine the error of the Thomists, both in the present case and on many other things, seems not to be far remote.

Such are the injurious tendencies which Goch combats, not only negatively, but positively, by confronting with them the truth. It was natural, however, that this disquisition, as shown in the last section, should lead him to some statements respecting the idea and the nature of the Church. Even in treating of the Monastic vow, he had described the Church as a mother possessed of more affection than prudence, and had drawn a distinction between its enactments and the Divine law. In one word, he had acknowledged *the Church's fallibility*. To us, at the present time, this may appear a very small and unimportant matter, but in that age, as the fierce inward conflicts of the heroic Luther half a century later demonstrate, it was of incalculable consequence. It was a flat contradiction of the principle of the whole mediæval period, which assigned to the Church a Divine rank and authority. It was the most vigorous assault upon the central

point of Catholicism and the Hierarchy. It is therefore much to be desired that Goch had explained himself upon it more fully. This, however, he has not done, probably because the question was too great, and the responsibility, under existing circumstances, too serious. Nevertheless he does emit certain hints, and these, as the dawning rudiments of the thoughts, which afterwards at the Reformation ripened into full conviction, are very important.

Here too, not confining himself to mere negation, he exercises enquiry and expresses his opinion. In place of simply advancing statements contrary to the prevailing doctrines on the subject of the Church, he endeavours to ascertain what the Church really is, and to evolve from general principles the definitions he gives of it. At the same time, the natural affinity of the subjects leads him to considerations respecting the Hierarchy, the Priesthood, and the Episcopacy; and we therefore deem it proper to collect into another chapter all that relates to these points.

CHAPTER FIFTH.

THE CHURCH.—PRIESTHOOD AND EPISCOPACY.—PRIESTHOOD AND MONACHISM.—PROPERTY AND PRIVATION.

Goch, in the first place, traces *the doctrine of the Church* back to those last and simple elements which constitute the foundation of all his Christian convictions, and even of his Theology. *Love*, from which he derives everything, and *liberty*, which spontaneously springs from love, are with him *the forming and governing principles of the Church.* As he cannot figure to himself a Christianity which is not free, so as little can he conceive a Church in that condition. If, as he expressly says, Christianity be the religion of liberty, and if the Church be the manifestation of Christianity, then the same principle which reigns in Christianity must also reign in the Church; and if in Christ, who is the Church's head, the most perfect liberty has been manifested, in union with

the highest degree of love, then must the same spirit which fills the head, likewise pervade the body and all its members. This last sentiment we must first unfold in the sense and with the words of Goch. There must be, he says,[1] in the universal Catholic Church a consummate perfection, excelling all kinds of perfection, claimed by self-devised modes of religious life,[2] and consisting essentially in inward sanctity. The Catholic Church is Christ's mystical body, well ordered and perfect in construction, and of this body Christ is the head, and communicates to the several members spirit and motion. A well ordered body, however, implies that the members are properly arranged as respects each other, and subordinated to the head. The Catholic Church then, being Christ's mystical body well and perfectly organized, must needs be duly proportioned with Christ, its head. This, however, would not be the case if the human will, as respects both the outward act of evangelical perfection, and also the inward disposition, were not conformed to the Divine will in Christ. Proportion signifies the commensurateness of one thing with another. The perfection or imperfection, however, of virtue is not measured by quantity but by quality. Here the greater is synonymous with the better. If then the Catholic Church did not possess perfection of the highest kind, and a perfection consonant with that of Christ, it would, as a body, be disproportioned with its head. It is impossible that a supremely perfect head can have a defective and imperfect body. But Christ is a supreme and perfect head, and, therefore, there must exist in the Catholic Church that plenitude of perfection, in virtue of which the human will, according to the measure of this temporal state, is conformed in all things to the will of Christ. That for this end, however, there is no need of any outward obligation or of any righteousness by works, such as, under the constraint of their vows, the monks perform, and that all depends upon faith, working by love, and consequently exercising a liberty begotten of the spirit, and circumscribed by no bound, are truths which Goch elsewhere declares and clearly illustrates. *The chief vocation of*

[1] Dialog. cap. 19. p. 196 and 197.

[2] religionum facticiarum, as they exist in the Monastic orders.

the Church accordingly consists in *appropriating and propagating the spirit of Christ*, and in the *practical exercise of the evangelical* life. The evangelical law which has been given her, and which is just the law of love and liberty, is of supreme and universal authority. Such is the original Divine ordinance, and it is perfectly sufficient for perfection of life, and consequently also for salvation. To this the Church has no doubt superadded positive enactments; but, according to what we have said, these can be regarded merely as decent outward customs, which contribute nothing essential either to the completeness or yet to the execution of the Gospel law, and only serve to heighten the solemnity of ecclesiastical transactions.[1] Yea, the Church militant, which is *not raised above error*, like a mother whose love exceeds her prudence, may well go too far in this. Her ordinances are, however, in all cases well intended, and though incompetent to produce what is spiritually and substantially good, may yet restrain from evil and furnish opportunity for improvement.[2] In this sense she may even, by vows or other obligations, "compel them to come in." In the communion of the Church, however, a distinction will always have to be drawn between those who come of their own accord and those who come because they are compelled. It is only the former who, incited by grace, and with liberty of spirit, endeavour after evangelical perfection and eternal salvation, whereas the rest are impelled by the mere stress of obligation, and an outward and accidental cause.[3] Such, however, is the nature of the *kingdom of heaven that it is not to be filled with reluctant subjects*, but only with such as, of free choice, follow the call; because that which is truly good can eminate only from love, and consequently only from liberty, for there is no liberty like that of love.[4]

In assigning the highest place in the Church to Christ, as its *Head* and *Pattern*, and in regarding his *priesthood* as *the chief of his offices*, Goch recognizes *the order of Priests* as the highest in the Church, and as not excelled even by *that of Bishops*. This is a highly important point. The apostolical

[1] Dialog. cap. 17. p. 177 and 178.
[2] Ibid. cap. 14. p. 164 and 165.
[3] Ibid. cap. 15. p. 171.—Comp. also the preceding pages 165—169.
[4] Ibid. cap. 17. p. 181 and 182.

age, at least in its first stadium, knew no difference between Presbyter and Bishop. The rise of Episcopacy was the first step in the development of the Hierarchy, and its consequences are incalculable. It required to be made, and from it, with a force which nothing could resist, the monarchy of the Pope was evolved through the medium of the hierarchical aristocracy. The papacy, however, had fulfilled its vocation in the Western group of nations, and the day was now dawning when it became necessary to make room for a more free and lofty development. And as once the most important step towards the introduction of the Hierarchy had been the decided elevation of Episcopacy over Presbytery; so now, the most important step towards emancipation from it was to recognize and establish the *essential equality between the Episcopal and Presbyterial* offices. It would have been a step still further in advance to have recognized the *universal priesthood* of Christians, in opposition to a separate priestly class; and this step we see taken by *John Wessel.* But it was not taken by *John of Goch.* On the contrary, he raises the priestly order to a high pre-eminence. The former step, however, he takes decidedly; and in this there are two things to be considered. On the one hand, there is the *return* it involved to what is *primitive and apostolical,* and, on the other, the *opposition to existing things,* and the preparation thereby made for a new series of developments. His notions are substantially as follows.[1] The sacerdotal is the simply and truly apostolical life, the highest perfection of the Christian religion. This may be concluded, in the first place, from the eminence of the priestly state, which is the highest in the Church militant. It is clear, that all perfection in the Church is a participation in the perfection of Christ, its head. In Christ, however, of whom it was said, "Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek," the priesthood is the highest of his dignities, for we call that rank the highest, which secures to its possessor the loftiest station in a community. Now it belongs to Christ, in virtue of his priesthood, to be the Prince and Head of the Church, because it is as a Priest that he legislates for and governs it. And agreeably to Christ's pattern, it belongs to the

[1] Dialog. cap. 20. p 199 sqq.

priests to be the leaders of the Catholic Church, and, by consecrating and dispensing the Sacraments, to minister as instruments of sanctification to the people. This is implied even in the etymology of their name. The priest is called *sacerdos*, because he is *quasi sacer dux, vel sacra dans, vel sacramentorum dispensator.* It is the duty of Priests to preach to God's people the doctrine of salvation, and amidst the perils of this world, to point out to them, both by the word of truth and a holy example, the way of life. They are therefore called *sacri duces*, their office being to go before us in the paths of righteousness. In like manner, it is specially incumbent upon them to administer the sacraments, and hence they are also *sacra dantes.* To be the leader, however, and dispenser of spiritual benefits to any community, intimates the chief place and station in it, and hence the *priesthood is the station of highest perfection.* In the Heavenly hierarchy, his is the highest place who stands nearest to God, and in the Ecclesiastical, his who is nearest to Christ. Now, this in the Church is done by the priest. Secluded from the affairs of the world and the flesh, and consecrated to the service of God, he is bound to devote himself wholly to the contemplation of Divine things, to keep his heart open for the reception of Divine gifts, and thus, from the plenitude of vision, to descend to the performance of his priestly functions. Unquestionably, this high and heavenly purity of mind must be required by him, because, he who is not himself advanced and perfected, cannot advance and perfect others, nor he who is in darkness enlighten them. This last reason is likewise a proof that the priesthood is the highest rank in the Church militant, and that a life, which is truly priestly, is also apostolical, so that, for the attainment of higher perfection, the priest does not require to change his station, as that includes all perfection, and nothing more is needful for him but that he should walk worthy of it. In fine, a further proof of the perfection of the rank of the priest[1] is implied in the fact, that his ordination and functions are the highest. It is the business of the priest to consecrate the body and blood of Christ. In this, however, resides the plenitude of all graces, and hence the sacrament of the altar is the sacrament of sacraments, and the consecration of it the highest and noblest act of the Church.

[1] Dialog. p. 105 sqq.

Inasmuch, then, as the priestly order are empowered and authorized to perform this so exalted service, it is proper that for its execution they should receive an ordination, which not only gives them superiority over all other ranks, but makes them to these the means of consummation and the channels of grace.[1]

It might here be objected[2] that *Episcopacy* is a higher office than *priesthood*, because the Bishop is authorized to perform all ecclesiastical acts, and not merely consecrates the Eucharist, but confirms, and confers orders,—functions which are not competent to a priest. To this the answer is, The priesthood is the highest order in the Church, because to create the body and blood of Christ is absolutely the greatest and noblest of the Church's acts, for which therefore the highest order is required. Besides, the authority possessed by the Bishop, to consecrate the Eucharist and administer the Sacraments, belongs to him on account of his priesthood, not of his episcopacy. If, however, there are certain privileges accorded to the Bishop, and which are wanting to the priest, such as the power to confirm, and to confer orders, these are the offspring either of custom, or of the appointment of the Church, *which have abstracted from the sacerdotal order much that was conferred upon it by Divine institution.* For instance, the power of absolution in all important cases (*casibus criminalibus*) was Divinely conferred upon priests by the saying, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven;" for this was spoken, not merely to Peter, but to all in whose name Peter spake on the occasion. To the same effect Christ, after his resurrection, said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whosoever's sins ye remit, are remitted unto them, and whoso-

[1] The words of this passage, which are difficult to translate, run as follows: Ordo sacerdotalis est summus in ecclesia militante; quia ipsius est consecrare corpus Christi et sanguinem, in quo est plenitudo omnium gratiarum. Et ideo hoc sacramentum altaris, quod est sacramentum sacramentorum, consummatur in ordine uno, tanquam in fine ultimo et completo, ut nihil desit ministerio ordinato, quia ipse ordo est superior aliis et *consummativus aliorum omnium ordinum*, quare merito sibi competit nolilissimus et summus actus Ecclesiae, qui est consecrare corpus Christi et sanguinem.

[2] Dialog. cap. 20. p. 206.

ever's sins ye retain, they are retained." This plenary authority, however, has been greatly circumscribed by the enactments of the Church, for many cases are reserved, some to the ordinary[1] (Bishop) and others to the apostolical authority (the Pope). But although, in this manner, the fulness of the priestly authority has been much abridged, still the dignity of the priestly rank remains unimpaired, if not in respect of the external exercise of all priestly functions, yet certainly in respect of the plenary qualification and ability. If to this it be objected,[2] that only Bishops are successors of the Apostles, the answer is, that this is true, in respect of the custom and enactment of the *Church*, but not in respect of the primitive institution of the Sacraments, and the *Divine appointment*. Bishops are the Apostles' successors as regards authority of jurisdiction, and the government of the people who are subject to them; and it is on this account that they are called prelates. As the captain, however, is a soldier among soldiers, and the abbot a monk among monks, so also is the bishop a priest among priests. This is involved even in the etymology of the name, *episcopos*, for it is compounded of επι, which means *over*, and σκοπος,[3] a *watcher*, as being one who is charged with the duty of superintendence. To exercise the oversight in any community, however, does not exclude him, whose duty this is, from being a member of that community, but merely binds him to some administrative work, and compels him zealously to serve those whom he superintends. This, however, indicates a burden rather than a dignity, and consequently the Apostle affirms, "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." He says a good work and not a great honour. For this reason, the bishops of former times used to live in common with their priests, like fathers among the inmates of their families, as St Augustine and St Martin relate.

To what we have said we have to add something respecting the *rank* and *external position of the clergyman*. Not only does he stand, upwards, upon an absolute equality with the bishop, but, downwards, he holds a rank superior to that of the monk.

[1] autoritas ordinata. [2] Ibid. p. 209.

[3] This expression also occurs in pure Greek, in the acceptation of "spy." No stress is here to be laid on the sort of etymology.

The seriousness, the austerity, the elevation above the world, which some monks really had, and many at least appeared to possess, might easily engender the notion that Monachism is the true state of perfection, the real blossom of the Christian life; And that place the monks of the mediæval period actually contrived to secure for themselves in public opinion. There were men, however, of deeper insight, who saw this to be only a corruption and an inversion of ecclesiastical order, and one of these was John of Goch. For although he did not assume a position of hostility to Monachism, he was just as far from sharing the blind reverence with which it was regarded by the multitude. He makes a decided difference between the clergyman *(clericus)* and the devotee *(religiosus)*, between sacerdotal orders and the Monastic vow.[1] Sacerdotal orders confer the power of exercising sacramental functions, which are the noblest in the militant Church. The Monastic vow, on the contrary, binds him who takes it to the exercise of outward actions, tending to the mortification of the body of sin; so that the monk is properly in a penitential state, and this is the reason why he wears an unsightly garment. Seeing that their several functions are so different, there must also be a difference in the perfection of their respective lives. This difference, Goch affirms, is recognized by Jerome, who, in a letter to Rusticus, says, "Live in the monastery in such a way as to deserve to be a priest." The fellowship of the bishop and his priests (the canonical life), according to the pictures of it drawn by St Martin and St Augustine, approximates much more closely to that of the Apostles than does the life which men lead in a monastery.

Another and very obvious objection, also stated by Goch,[2] was that the *Monastic life* manifects its *superiority* in the total *renunciation of property* which it involves, whereas the *priest*, without injury to his sacerdotal rank, can both *possess property* and legally bequeath it. To this objection he answers as follows, "Property is only possible in respect to temporal things; for that which is eternal and universal belongs to no one in particular. It is, however, one thing to possess temporal, and another to possess personal property.[3] *To possess temporal things* is a necessity of

[1] Dialog. cap. 20. p. 211 sqq. [2] Dialog. cap. 21. p. 213 sqq.
[3] Comp. here the passages, Dialog. p. 233, 235, and 237.

this present life, which cannot otherwise be supported. *To possess personal property* is, in respect of the possessor himself, unquestionably a fault of corrupt nature, but, in respect of the entire human race, a means of preserving general peace, and to many, a protection against negligence and sloth. To possess temporal things therefore, does not necessarily impair sanctity, for Christ had a purse, and the Apostles property, of their own, and so too have the monks of all orders, and, hence, that cannot be reckoned a disadvantage to the priestly rank. Personal property, on the contrary, may be possessed in two ways, either in virtue of the right of possession, or from love to that which is possessed. The right to possess belongs to Christians as well as others, *by the laws of their religion.* The love of the thing possessed is sinful, and unquestionably entails an extenuation of perfection, for personal attachment to temporal things impairs the liberty of the soul, which is only to be acquired by the love of that which is Divine. If, therefore, a priest possess a temporal estate, and fix upon it his chief affection, he does not possess it, according to the dignity of the Christian life, for, as even the tonsure-intimates,[1] he ought to renounce that which is secular and transitory. If, however, he possess it solely for the uses of life, and the support of the brethren, he does not thereby undergo any loss of perfection, provided he keep free the bent of his will, according to the word of the Psalmist, "If riches increase set not your heart upon them." On the other hand, the renunciation of property in consequence of his vow, cannot promote perfection of life in the member of a religious order, unless he keep the bent of his will unfettered by the desire of temporal possessions,[2] for the perfection of sanctification consists wholly in the freeness of love to God; and, therefore, the external performance of a work profits nothing unless the inward disposition of the mind correspond.

But then, as Goch again suggests in objection, did not

1 Superior rasura capitis.

2 Nec etiam nihil vel proprio vel commmuniter habere, says Goch, elsewhere (Dialog. cap. 19 p. 192) pertinently, ut faciunt fratres minores, est summa perfectio Christianae religionis, sed nihil *velle* habere, et affectum voluntatis liberum et absolutum ab omni creatura, quae est bonum particulare, reservare, et in Deo habere resolutum, quod est bonum universale, est summa perfectio Christianae religionis.

the Lord himself say, "A *rich* man can hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven," and again, "Whosoever he be that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple?" To this he replies, by drawing a distinction between the rich man of the world and the rich man of the Gospel, and between the worldly and the evangelical poor man.[1] The rich man of the world is he who is filled with the desire of possessing transitory things, and wholly absorbed and enslaved by the love of them when possessed, and such is the rich man, who hardly enters into the kingdom of heaven. On the contrary, the evangelical rich man is he who, delivered from the desire of transitory things, rises with the entire force of his will to God, and is wholly dissolved into the free love of Him. Such is the man to whom to live is Christ, and to die gain. In like manner, the poor of this world are they who, possessing little or nothing of its transitory goods, still pant so eagerly for their acquisition, that forgetting eternal things, they seek in those that are temporal the highest object of life. Such persons are poor indeed, because they both lose the sweetness of present blessings, and also forego the enjoyment of those which are eternal. The evangelical poor, on the other hand, are they who, destitute of temporal things, or, at least, using the little of them which they possess, with affections so loose, as to escape all the snares which threaten the conscience, aspire without impediment or pause to the love of eternal blessings. Such are they who "buy as though they did not possess, and who use this world as not abusing it," by keeping their inclination and will free and unfettered. These are also they of whom the Lord says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." He says not poor in substance, but poor in spirit, for he means the bent of the will.

Thus did Goch labour upon a positive basis, and at the very root of the matter, to promote the Reformation, but without causing any outward disturbance. To the legality of the dominant Church, degenerating often into mere Pharisaism, he opposed the free, filial, and devoted spirit of the Gospel; to the liberalism of Antinomian principles, the strict obedience and active moral practice of

[1] Dialog. cap. 21. p. 217—222.

Christianity; to false reliance upon ecclesiastical and outward works of virtue and their merit, the deep felt want of the grace of God; and to the self-devised sanctity of Monachism, which pretended to be superior to every other, but never stepped beyond the circle of obligation, the higher sentiment of a truly Apostolic and Catholic Christian piety, the offspring of free love. He required that this spirit of piety, founded upon God, and spontaneous in its motions, should be purely and unfeignedly expressed in the Church, and where he did not discover it, where he saw it displaced by the ordinances of men, there he was not afraid to speak out, and to accuse the visible Church of error and abuse. He especially considered as a great disorder, and tending to many improprieties, that the Episcopal office was raised above the Priestly, and by demonstrating their original equality, he took one of the most important steps in that opposition to the hierarchy, which reached its full development at the Reformation, by the revival of the idea of the common priesthood of all Christians.

In so doing Goch always proceeds upon the foundation of Scripture, whose positive data, however, are in his hands vivified by experience, and illustrated by the light of independent thought. A logic, often of great subtlety, is associated with a Mysticism which is never fanciful or trifling, but always rests on a sound practical basis, and thus keeps its proper place as a means and not an end. All his thoughts are bound together, and governed by a thorough practical spirit, or, in other words, have a reference to active faith, love, and holiness. Not by any means that he seeks to cover defects in intelligence and science by laying stress upon practice, but because, in his mind, the practical always originates in the profound apprehension of Christian ideas by the intelligence.

PART FOURTH.

RELATION OF GOCH

TO

HIS OWN AND AFTER TIMES.

CHAPTER FIRST.

GOCH'S CONNEXION WITH THE REFORMATION. CORNELIUS GRAPHEUS. OPINIONS CONCERNING GOCH.

It is not known that, during his lifetime, Goch gave any offence, excited the suspicion of the hierarchy, or endured the smallest persecution from its ministers. The worst that befel him was a literary attack on the part of the Dominican against whom he wrote the *Epistola apologetica*. With this single exception, he laboured quietly in the bosom of the Church, died in the enjoyment of public esteem, and received honourable interment in the chapel of the priory of which he had so long been superior. This could not have happened but for the fact, that he kept himself with his opinions substantially within the pale of the Church, and appeared upon the stage of public life with plans of innovation and improvement, much less than many of his predecessors and cotemporaries. His writings, so richly stored with the elements of the Reformation, were, no doubt, at first read only within a confined circle, and by persons of congenial sentiments, who, in place of taking offence, found in

them plentiful sources of instruction and comfort. That susceptible minds of this kind existed at the time, and in no small number in these districts, is evident from many circumstances in the history of the Brethren of the Common Lot, and the lives of Wessel, and Erasmus, as was also the case at the first commencement of the Reformation in the Netherlands. Beyond his own immediate and quiet circle, Goch's influence seems at first not to have extended. At least there are none of the more celebrated Reformers on whom it can be shewn to have operated in the way of exciting, instructing, or determining the bent of their minds. In particular, we can find no trace of *Luther's* having been acquainted with his writings and labours, as we know he was with those of *John Wessel.*[1] Notwithstanding of this, however, Goch's intimate connexion with the Reformation is certain beyond all doubt. The Reformation required other preparatory work than that which is outward and ostentatious. In order to the growth of a new spiritual seed, it was indispensably requisite that a preliminary fertilizing process should be silently carried on, in the narrower but more profoundly susceptible circles of society, which should in due season bring forth to the light its living fruits. Such accordingly is the work in which we find Goch engaged; and that it was in the best sense of the word *Reformatory*, that is, the sort of preparation for the Reformation required by the times, does not, from what we have said, appear to admit a doubt. In the most decided way he sets out, not merely with the formal principle of the Reformation, by founding all Christian doctrine upon Scripture, but also with its material principle, which is the justification of the sinner in the sight of God, effected not by works, but solely by a living faith in Christ. As the consequence of these principles, he likewise taught in detail the essential doctrines of the Reformation, such for instance as that of man's sinfulness, and absolute need of salvation, of Divine grace as the only source of pardon and the only foundation of good in man, of faith, and its inseparable concomitant love, as the fountain of all true morality,

[1] Walch says in his preface to the Monim. med. æv. vol. i. fasc. 4. p. xxiv., Num legerit *Lutherus libellos Gochianos*, dubitandi causa est. Quamvis enim fieri potuerit, ut in Erfurtensi bibliotheca illi una cum Wesselii similiumque scriptorum opusculis servarentur; nullam tamen unquam a *Luthero* nostri, memini, fieri mentionem.

of the liberty of the Christian, resting upon this foundation, and of the distinction between the Law and the Gospel. In like manner, as regards several very decided points, he assumed the same antagonistic attitude, which the Reformers afterwards occupied with more energy and, doubtless, with greater success. He combatted the errors of the Schoolmen, of Pelagianism, and of Monachism, which were the basis of the Church's doctrine respecting merit, as they also were of the hierarchy. He asserted the principle of the fallibility of the Church, and from that position, contested many of her authoritative ordinances and articles of doctrine, such as the institution of ecclesiastical vows and obligations, the belief of the efficacy of the sacraments, *ex opere operato*, the distinction of priests and bishops as essential and of Divine appointment, and the prevailing opinion on the subject of evangelical poverty. In general, he helped, and by his clear and persuasive style may be said to have contributed largely, to liberate Christianity from many pernicious and deeply-rooted priestly fictions, and from the institutions based upon these, and to bring it back to the simplicity and purity of the Apostolic faith.[1] If all this was not to promote the Reformation, it would be difficult to say to what else that language can be applied. Much speaking about the matter was not absolutely requisite, and was likewise foreign

[1] Walch gives a summary of the reformatory principles in the Theology of Goch, in the above-cited preface, p. xxxv. xxxvii. in the following articles. I. Scripturum sacram unicum esse rerum credendarum fontem unicamque regulam, ad quam patrum aliorumque doctorum opiniones sint dijudicandae. II. Impium esse et pelagianam haeresin revocare, qui credat, naturales vires liberi arbitrii sine auxilio gratiae ad internae et externae pietatis opus sufficere. III. Peccare, qui variis cultus externi partibus, immo ἐθελοθρησκειας generibus et exercitiis corporis virtutem christianam absolvi putant omnique erga alios carent amore. IV. Ecclesiam posse errare. V. Doctrinam Thomae de votis monasticis eorumque virtute esse erroneam sibique contrariam. VI. Praedestinationem non ponere impossibilitatem peccandi, sed impossibilitatem in fine deficiendi et finaliter in peccato perseverandi. VII. Sacramenta non ex opere operato operari, sed requirere certam recipientis dispositionem. VIII. Discrimen, quod inter presbyteros et episcopos interesse Romanenses volunt, non esse jure divino constitutum, sed ab ecclesia injuria introductum. IX. Paupertatem evangelicam non requirere, ut quis nihil possideat, sed ut animum a nimio divitiarum amore revocet: hinc fictam monasticam paupertatem legibus Christi esse contrariam.

to Goch's genius and character. He had certainly no such distinct and express consciousness of its approaching advent as Huss, Wessel, and some others, but an aspiration after it, and a presentiment of it he certainly had, as every one must have of the event for which he helps to prepare the way.

Although, however, Goch did not labour in an ostensible and popular manner, or outwardly to any great extent, for the Reformation, he yet unquestionably exercised a most important influence upon those immediately around him, as well as upon several who, in their turn and in the same way, stirred up others. He was *the commencement of a Reformatory Tradition.* Of this we have sufficient evidence in the opinions and judgments respecting him, which have come down from the period immediately posterior to his death and from after times, in the efforts that were made for the discovery and publication of his writings, and in the interest awakened by such of them as were actually published.

And here in particular we have to mention a man, who was eminently serviceable in spreading his works and doctrines, but who, being of a keener temperament than their author, involved himself thereby in trouble. We speak of *Cornelius Grapheus* (Scribonius, or in the common dialect, *Schryver*) born in 1482 at Alost (Aelst) in Flanders,[1] and a person distinguished in many ways.[2] He was secretary to the city of Antwerp, but at the same time eminent in the arts and sciences, a historian, orator, poet, and musician, master of several languages, and on terms of intimate friendship with the celebrated Erasmus. In those days, there were in all the cities of the Netherlands many who favoured a purer Gospel, and at Antwerp, Grapheus seems to have formed their centre. About the year 1521, and consequently about the time of the diet at Worms, Grapheus published Goch's book, On the liberty of the Christian religion, with a very spirited preface. By the spread

1 Alostanus Flander in Gerdes.

2 Comp. about him *Dan. Gerdesii* Hist. Evangelii renov. Groning. et Brem. MDCCXLIX. Tom. iii. p. 20, where there is also a likeness of Grapheus indicating great vivacity of mind, but especially Dan. Gerdesii Scrinium Antiquarium sive Miscellanea Groningana. Gron. et Brem. 1756. Tom. v. P. 1. p. 496—508.—also the French epitome of the Hist. reform. Belg. by *Gerh. Brant* vol. I. p. 18.—and with regard to the writings of Grapheus, *Foppens* Biblioth. Belg. T. i. p. 201.

of the work itself, and especially by the warlike tone of the preface with which he accompanied it, he irritated the Inquisitors, who charged him with abetting the Lutheran heresy, arraigned him before their court, and caused him to be deposed from his office, and imprisoned at Brussels. His confinement was of considerable duration. During the course of it, he addressed an Epistle to John Carondiletus[1] which is dated the 18th October 1521, and is still extant. Ultimately he was forced to recant, recall his preface and commit it to the flames. In subscribing the act drawn up for this purpose, which is dated the 23d day of April 1522, and is of considerable length, he certainly shewed little of the spirit of a hero. Among other things, which could not be consonant with his conviction, he acknowledged, that he had acted foolishly and inconsiderately in so highly recommending Goch's treatise on Christian liberty, as he had never himself read the book. In consequence of this submission, which he may possibly have regarded as a mere formality, forced from him by the violence of authority, he resumed his former position, was permitted to return to his friends, and subsequently edited several works, which won great celebrity for his name. After surviving the leading events of the Reformation, he died at the age of 76, in the year 1588. It is not with Grapheus in the later period of his life that we have here to do, but with the young man of 29, the enthusiastic admirer of Goch. This sentiment he expresses in the forementioned preface in a very characteristic way. With great penetration and truth he states the contrast between the mediæval principles and those of the Reformation, between the legal and the free Gospel spirit, paints in strong colours the decline of Christianity, and exhorts his countrymen to the work of restoring it. For this too he prescribes the most proper means, specifying a return to Apostolic simplicity and eternal truth, the *propagation of the Scriptures in the mother tongue*, a plain and correct *exposition of them* for the use of the people, the perusal of the recent authors who seek to edify the minds of Christians, and not to freeze or inflate them with subtilities, and a lively *interest on the part of the laity in the affairs of the Church and of Christianity*. After shewing how believers

[1] The letter is printed in *Brant* Hist. Reformat. Belg. Tom. 1. Lib. II. p. 71—79.

have been exalted, by Christ and by the spirit which he imparts, to childship with God, and emancipated from the law, and the power and curse of sin, he characterises in the following highly striking terms the state into which the Christianity of the middle ages had sunk, "We have *declined from Christ to Moses*, and backslidden from *Moses* to *Pharaoh*. We have rejected the light food of evangelical liberty, and from the quietness of the Christian life and the repose of the Gospel, have returned to the flesh pots of Egypt, and to the bondage of the brick-kilns. We have despised the easy yoke and light burden of Christ, and have betaken ourselves to the heavy load of human ordinances, giving attention to lying spirits and not believing the Gospel, distrusting the surest promises of the Saviour, but trusting in human fables. In place of the Gospel, we have adopted the decrees of the Pope, in place of Jesus, a certain Aristotle, in place of piety, ceremonies, and in place of the truth, falsehood. Afraid of all things, we do nothing with confidence and love. How foolish and infatuated we have been! What Satan, what lying spirit has bewitched us, that now for more than 800 years we have so deplorably backslidden from liberty to miserable bondage, from faith to infidelity, from hope to anxiety, from love to fear, from earnest piety to cold ceremonialism, from Christ to Moses, *from the Gospel* to the *Jewish law*, inculcating nothing but unprofitable works, so that what we began in the spirit we are now finishing in the flesh? Once all of us without distinction, whether freemen or servants, were still equally Christians and brethren; once we were a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation. . . . Now, no longer kings and priests, we have become slaves of men, no longer a chosen generation, we have become a despicable race, no longer a royal priesthood, we have become a vulgar folk. Once we were the people of God, now we are but the subjects of Moses; once we were called sons of the heavenly Father, brethren and fellow-heirs of Jesus, now we are sons of the earthly Adam, and prefer taking our name from St Francis, or St Dominic, from Augustine or Bernard, rather than from Christ. Once we were called disciples of Christ, now we are scholars of Aristotle, of Aquinas, of Scotus, and of Albert. Once we were simple-minded, purely and freely instructed in the word of God, now we are vexed and deluded with controversies, and

sophisms, inferences and distinctions. Then we acknowledged Christ alone as the foundation of our faith, our leader and our head, who has promised to be with us always even to the end of the world; now, however, another foundation has been laid, and in place of the celestial leader and head, we have set up a secular and an earthly one, yea, a sort of idol. . . . . Once the service of the Church was performed gratuitously, now there is nothing but what must be purchased with gold. All things, however holy, are objects of sale, so that not even the smallest spot of earth is left free for the burial of a Christian's corpse. . . . Once Christians were allowed to choose for themselves suitable pastors; now, however, as is most deeply to be deplored, ambitious men, with tyrannical power, by gifts and menaces, in right ways and wrong, intrude into the spiritual office, and enter otherwise than by the door. Nor is even that sufficient. Ignorant hirelings, men living in concubinage and debauchery, are generally appointed, who, by their profligate example, hurry the souls of the simple, which Jesus purchased with his blood, along with their own, to destruction. These men, when called upon to preach the true Gospel doctrine, either in their ignorance interpret it falsely, or appoint stupid monks as their substitutes, who, for the sake of gain, pervert still more the work of God, and in place of the Gospel and the doctrine of Paul, inculcate dreams of their own, and commend to the people their subtile, enlightened, holy, seraphic, hierarchical, invincible, and most profound doctors, their sums (*summulas*), canons, and laws, their Aristotle and Master of Sentences. . . . . Once the doctrine of Christ was common to all promiscuously, the only exception being that women were not allowed to speak in public; now, however, our masters, licentiates, and bachelors, our haughty Thomists, and obscure Scotists, alone have the right to explain Scripture. As for us, they despise us, and exclude us from the kingdom of which they claim the sole possession. 'This people,' they say, 'know not the law, and are cursed; in fact they know nothing at all, and ought not to dispute upon theology; they never took a degree; they do not understand logic; they have not grown old in the study of Aristotle; they never saw the work of St Thomas, or read the subtile Scotus, or the unanswerable Alexander of Hales; they

cannot even form a syllogism; they are but painters, poets, orators,[1] who may perhaps write a good Latin style, but in other respects are unlettered laymen. Such persons ought not to be allowed to have the sacred Scriptures in the mother tongue, for they do not comprehend what they read, and fall into gross errors.' . . . . And yet were not they simple and illiterate laymen, whom Christ called before all others into his presence, and to whom he taught his Divine philosophy? Did not Paul, the chosen vessel, boast of knowing nothing but Christ and him crucified? Has not God promised, by the prophet Joel, 'I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh.' Where are laymen here excluded? Or perhaps is the Spirit of God extinct? Is it no longer competent to do what it then did? Much do I wish that Christ's philosophy, being common to all, were likewise translated by learned and good expositors into the vulgar tongue, so that every professor of the Christian religion, at least every one who knows to read, might purchase a copy for himself, and by the preparation of the spirit *(per spiritus promptitudinem)* be introduced to an acquaintance with evangelical truth. I also wish, that in order to the suppression of human opinions, learned priests were appointed over all Churches, who upon the festivals, when the Christian people are assembled with their Bibles in their hands, should twice a-day, instead of preaching a sermon, instruct them in the doctrine of the evangelists and apostles, in strict accordance with the Word. In this way, in place of being any longer led astray by circuitous paths, or deceived by human dreams and errors, the people might be conducted by the royal road directly to Christ. This, I well know, will be taken ill by those gluttonous monks (for I always except the good ones) who pervert the Word of God to their own gain. But I shall not be restrained by them from saying it, for there is need that the truth should once for all be set in its right place. You see then, dearest brethren in Christ, how low Christianity has sunk, and how we have been robbed of our freedom by human traditions. But come all ye, to whom Christian liberty is dear, as it is to me, contend for Christ, and be of good courage. Behold, even now,

[1] Grapheus here manifestly alludes to himself, and to what was currently said of him among the clergy.

the fairest opportunity of achieving our deliverance. The sciences are being once more gradually restored. Restored once more is the Gospel of Jesus, and Paul rises from the dead. For what else does the Gospel breathe, or what else does St Paul teach, exhort, and inculcate upon us, but the liberty which is in Christ Jesus? If, therefore, zeal for piety, if love for your own salvation, if the appeal of Christian affection are of any avail with you, ye friends of the Christian religion, I exhort and adjure you by Christ Jesus, with whose blood you have been bought, to read those authors who treat of him, and incite us to the love of God, and kindle the spark of it in the heart; and decidedly to reject all the subtle Scholastics who puff up but do not edify, who sharpen the intellect but darken the heart. Among the former, one of the most excellent is the writer whom, by the Divine guidance, I have discovered, and now introduce to you, viz., *John of Goch*, a man of rare erudition, inferior to none of his day, *the most zealous pioneer of Christian liberty*, and the most diligent expounder of the Divine law. Read him by day and night, especially when you have leisure from the perusal of sacred Scripture, and the Epistles of Paul, to which no doubt your chief study is due. Farewell in Christ Jesus."

In the same strain, *Grapheus* expresses himself in the preface[1] to another smaller work of Goch, viz., the *Epistola Apologetica*, which he seems to have subsequently[2] edited. This preface is dedicated to the priest and doctor, *Nicolaus von Herzogenbusch*,[3] and contains the following very characteristic remarks. *Grapheus* expresses the great delight he took in the little treatise, as a monument of genuine Christian philosophy. "I was astonished," he says, "that a man, in that age, had gone so far even though not writing in the vulgar tongue. I admired the undaunted fortitude of a most independent mind. I admired the highly pertinent and consecutive quotations both from the Holy Scripture and orthodox ecclesiastical authors. I congratulated myself

[1] This is printed in Walch Monim. med. aev. vol. ii. fasc. 1. Praef. p. xii.—xvii.

[2] The preface is, without assignation of the year, merely dated Antwerpiæ X. Calend. Sept.

[3] With the predicate, verae christianae theologicae candidato, academiae Antwerpiensis moderatori vigilantissimo.

that even the last century, agreeing with us, had diverged so freely from the Scholastic philosophy, and that so admirable an author had been delivered from the darkness. . . . . Rejected it may be by the miserable sycophants, who pass their lives in philosophic subtilties contradictory of the creed of simple Christianity, who despise the holy teachers of the ancient Church, and prefer Aristotle, Averroes, Albert, Thomas, Alvarus, Sylvester, and other sophists of the same class almost to the Gospel itself, who ascribe more weight to their dreaming little doctors *(doctorculis)* than to the holy prophets of God, the evangelists and apostles, who denounce as heretical, blasphemous, scandalous, and offensive to every pious (which means superstitious) ear, and fit for fire and flames, whatever does not smack of their Aristotle, Thomas or Holcot, and who are continually endeavouring, by their writings, but with fruitless effort, to show that the heavenly doctrine of Christ can not be upheld without the help of the Aristotelian philosophy." *Grapheus* confidently hopes that true and simple Christian philosophy will soon and perfectly revive from the oppression under which it has hitherto laboured, although there were some who strove with united effort to keep it down, but who must just be allowed to cry and threaten, rage, curse, and persecute as they were doing. "The Christian philosophy will not thereby be shaken, subverted, or unsettled, for it is founded on the firm rock of truth, and in spite of them, will happily triumph over the whole world. They may pride themselves as they please in their vain opinions, we on the contrary will with honest minds embrace the pure doctrine of Christ, drawn from the wells of Holy Scripture, and not from the marshy puddles of Thomas or Aristotle. That is what we honour and will endeavour to restore, while with the warmest sympathy of Christian affection, we earnestly invoke Christ himself to open the eyes of these blind leaders of the blind, that at last they may see the light, recognize the truth, and recover their senses."

After Grapheus, we have next to refer to an *anonymous* writer, who was a warm admirer of the works of Goch, and has left us a letter on those of them that survive.[1] This letter was evidently

[1] The letter is printed in *Walch* Monim. med. aev. vol. i. fasc. 4. Praefat. xxxi.—xxxiii.

written subsequently to the fore-mentioned prefaces of *Grapheus*, for it alludes to some of Goch's writings as having been already printed and published; but there can be no doubt that it dates from the first 30—40 years of the 16th century, for the writer, who had searched the Monastery Tabor at Mechlin, for any surviving remains of its distinguished Superior, speaks of inhabitants of that city who were still acquainted with the particulars of his life, either from personal knowledge or direct tradition.[1] This shows, on the one hand, that the impression made by Goch upon those in his immediate vicinity was strong enough to leave lasting traces in their memory, and on the other hand, that at a very early period, and by various parties, a lively interest was taken in the spiritual treasures he left behind him. The person to whom the letter was addressed, and who was a certain N. (perhaps the Nicolaus von Herzogenbusch we have already mentioned) shared this interest. Both the writer and the receiver of the letter reckoned Goch one of the *first theologians of their age*, and set a high value upon his Book on Christian liberty. The writer specially commends the moderation he shows on the perplexed and doubtful question respecting Monachism and the worth of vows, inasmuch as he does not reject and condemn the whole system, but only seeks to lop off its false excrescences; and therefore he expresses a hope, that his labours may have the effect of enlightening even those persons who shrunk, as they would do from poison, from the writings of more violent and bitter Theologians. (This is no doubt an allusion to Luther.) "But to return," says the author, "to Goch, I cannot sufficiently wonder how it was possible for this man, in that iron and illiterate age, to have had his mind so brightly illuminated with light from God, as enabled him intrepidly to combat and refute the errors of the most distinguished teachers, especially as he had not gained from the schools even the heathenish title of Master of Arts, a fact testified by inhabitants of Mechlin still alive and acquainted with the particulars of his life.[1] At the same time it would be high presumption were any one so inflated

[1] . . . id quod testantur, qui etiamnum vivunt apud Mechlinienses, Gochianae vitae et status probe gnari.

in his carnal mind, as to tolerate no teachers but the Rabbins, that is, the professors of the Scholastic philosophy, and suppose that the influences of the Holy Spirit cared or waited for glittering distinctions and titles. Not by outward consequence, nor by the party to which he belongs, but by his own spirit, ought a man to be estimated. He only who judges by this rule, judges righteously."

Not long after this Epistle was written, we find a brief historical sketch of Goch and his labours, in the well known Catalogue of the Witnesses of the truth prior to the Reformation, by Matthias *Flacius*, which was first published at Basle in 1556. Here[1] Goch is very properly associated with John of Wesel and John Wessel, and the substance of his opinions is summed up as follows: "John Goch, a priest at Mechlin, flourished about 110 years ago. Upon the article of justification through grace, he held perfectly correct views, as he did on many other subjects. He maintained that the writings of Thomas, Albert, and other sophists, being derived from the muddy fountains of the philosophers, obscured, more than they illustrated the truth, contradicted canonical doctrine, were even inconsistent with themselves, and bore traces of the Pelagian heresy. The writings of modern theologians, especially of the mendicant orders, were, in his opinion, destitute of any solid foundation. In place of enlightening the mind, they rather darken the naked and simple truth, and minister to vanity. We ought to follow Scripture alone, and try all other authors by it. To it must be subjected even the decrees of Popes and Councils. He wholly rejects the Monastic vow, as useless for piety, and hostile to Christian liberty, and no less all self-devised satisfactions and good works. Respecting Christianity, he complains that it has degenerated into Judaism and Pharisaism. He strenuously maintains that we are justified by virtue of Christ's merit, through faith, and not by any deserts of our own. He says that sin still cleaves to good men, but that it is forgiven to them for the sake of Christ; and he decidedly refutes the sophists who extenuate the sin still lingering in the saints. He unflinchingly follows the footsteps of Paul in

[1] Catalog. Test. verit. lib. xix. tom. ii. p. 887. edit. Lugdun. Comp. Walchii Monim. med. aev. vol. i. fasc. 4. Praefat. p. xix.

preaching the merit of Christ, and asserts that there is no need of the glosses of the sophists in expounding the Apostle, but that, on the contrary, these pervert his meaning. It would probably be found that he also held right opinions upon other articles, if we possessed all his writings. Only part of them, however, have been printed, and even these are incomplete." I have given in full this sketch of *Flacius*, because, although it contains no new particulars respecting Goch, it shews the opinion entertained of him by one of the most learned promoters of the Reformation, and because it is also characteristic of the style in which *Flacius* writes his history. On the whole, his statement of the views of Goch is correct. It is obvious, however, partly that he makes him figure as much as possible in the garb of Lutheran orthodoxy, and partly too that he omits several essentially characteristic traits; in short, that he depicts him, not altogether as he appeared individually and objectively in history, but more according to a received type, and for a particular polemical and apologetical purpose.

These, the oldest panegyrists of Goch, are succeeded in the following centuries by the historians of literature, or of the Reformation. Conrad *Gesner*, in his Universal Library,[1] gives a catalogue of his writings with a few extracts. Henry *Pantaleon*,[2] in his Sketch of the illustrious men of Germany, makes honourable mention of him as a most learned and pious man, and succinctly repeats what is said by Flacius. *Von der Hardt*[3] gives a summary of his writings. *Lewis* of *Seckendorf*, in his celebrated History of Lutheranism, alludes to him in a cursory manner,[4] but forms a just estimate of his value as a distinguished pioneer of the Reformation. *Gerius*, in his Appendix to Cave's History of Ecclesiastical Authors,[5] commends Goch, calls him the friend

[1] Biblioth. univers. Tigur. MDXLV. p. 442.

[2] Prosopographia Heroum atque illustr. viror. totius Germaniae. Basil. 1565. p. 461.

[3] Antiqua literar. monimenta autographa Lutheri aliorumque a) anno 1517 usque ad annum 1546. Helmst. 1690. sqq. t. ii. p. 76.

[4] Historia Lutheranismi. Francof. et Lips. 1692. Lib. i. sect. 54. § 133. Supplement ad indic. i. num. 30. *Seckendorf* denies any outward connection of Luther with Goch, and contends only for a congeniality of spirit. He derived his knowledge of Goch from the Catalog. Biblioth. Rudolph. tom. ii. p. 77 sqq.

[5] *Cave* Hist. Lit. vol. ii. Append. p. 187. ed. Basil. 1745.

of Wessel, and speaks of him in the style of Grapheus, as one of the most learned and evangelically enlightened men of his age, and as an excellent pioneer in the cause of Christian liberty. Even J. Albert *Fabricius* does not refuse him a place in his Library ;[1] and, in like manner, we find our author and his works either briefly or largely noticed by *Foppens*,[2] *Guicciardini*,[3] *Van Gestel*,[4] and the two learned Dutchmen, Daniel and David Clemens *Gerdes*.[5]

The most of these writers were Protestants, and speak of Goch in laudatory terms. It is natural, that as the obverse of the high estimation in which he was held by them, we should find him repudiated by the Catholic Church and its members.[6] *The Council of Trent* places Goch in the first class of prohibited authors, whose works ought never to be read by the adherents of the Catholic faith.[7] *Van Gestel*, at the least, says nothing in his favour, and *Foppens* much that is decidedly of an opposite character. His words are : "John Pupper was a friend of Wessel of Groningen, and a priest of some learning, but fond of innovation, and who preached, to a sickening extent, the necessity of a Reformation in the Church. He also wrote to the same effect ; and the Tridentine Fathers have therefore condemned his works."[8] This treatment on the part of the Catholics amounts to a valuable testimony in favour of Goch's character as a Reformer.

[1] Biblioth. Lat. med. et. inf. aetat. Lib. ix. t. iv. p. 228.

[2] Biblioth. Belg. Bruxell. 1739. t. ii. p. 714. 715.

[3] Description de tous les Pais-bas. Arnh. 1613. p. 214.

[4] Hist. Archiep. Mechlin. 1725. p. 81. See above.

[5] *Daniel Gerdes* in Scrin. antiquar. sive Miscellan. Groning. t. v. Pars 1. p. 497. not. 6. Groning. et Brem. 1756. Florileg. libror. rar. s. v. *Goch* p. 110. Histor. evang. renov. t. iii. p. 20. Dav. Clem. *Gerdes* Biblioth. curieuse. t. ix. p. 194. Comp. *Walch* Praef. ad monim. med. aev. ii. 1. p. iv.—xii.

[6] Dav. Clem. *Gerdes* very justly says in the Biblioth. cur. t. ix. p. 194 : On n'aura pas sujet de s'étonner de ce que les livres de Gochius ont été flétris avec tant de sévérité, si l'on se donne la peine d'en lire quelques feuillets, puisqu'on y remarquera une liberté de penser qui ne pouvoit être que prejudiciable aux opinions reçues dans l'église avant la réforme.

[7] *Walch* monim. med. aev. i. 4. Praef. p. xxv. *Walch* quotes all the passages in which the name of Goch is mentioned in the various editions of the Index libr. prohib. Cologne 1597, p. 26. Paris 1599. p. 159. Madrid 1583. p. 40. Rom. 1664. p. 260.

[8] Foppens Biblioth. belg. t. ii. p. 715.

More recently, however, Christian Will. Fran. *Walch* has rendered the most important services to Goch and his writings. Two of the most valuable of these, he has reprinted in his Monimenta Medii Ævi, and in prefaces to them,[1] has embraced the opportunity of expatiating upon their author. He justly discriminates[2] between two classes of the witnesses for the truth prior to the Reformation, those who combat the corruptions of the clergy, and those who refute the errors of the teachers. Both, he says, were indispensably necessary to pave the way for a Reformation of the Church, but as the latter were fewer in number, they and their writings have a proportionally stronger claim to be highly appreciated, and to this class Goch belongs. Walch does not overlook certain defects in his method of interpreting Scripture, nor the artificialities in his expositions of doctrine; but at the same time, on the strength of the general tendency of his views, he does not hesitate to place him on the roll of the Lutherans who preceded Luther, and in the first rank of enlightened theologians.

Among the modern Church historians who speak honourably of Goch, we have particularly to mention *Schroeckh* and *Gieseler*. The former[3] gives a summary of the contents of the work on the Four errors touching the Gospel law. The latter[4] associates him with John of Wesel, and the still more profound John Wessel, as the leading champions of the principles of Scripture and St Augustine, who first formed a path for the Reformation, and were chiefly instrumental in exalting spiritual liberty to its place, as the soul of all Christian virtue, and he gives well-selected and characteristic extracts from his works as reprinted in the collections of Walch.[5] With these exceptions, however, which ought to be gratefully acknowledged, modern writers have unduly neglected Goch, so that hitherto not only has no separate work been

[1] Monim. med. aev. Goetting. 1760. vol. i. fasc. 4. Praef. p. xiii.—xxxvii., and vol. ii. fasc. 1. Praef. p. ii.—xxiv.

[2] Vol. i. fasc. 4. Praef. p. xxxiv.

[3] Christl. Kirchengesch. Th. 33, s. 303—308.

[4] Lehrbuch der K. Gesch. B. 2. Abth. 4. s. 488—492.

[5] Goch's principal work on Christian liberty appears not to have been accessible to Gieseler.

devoted to him, but he has even been passed in silence in works where some notice of him might justly have been expected.[1]

CHAPTER SECOND.

GOCH'S WRITINGS. THEIR VARIOUS EDITIONS.

As he did not cause any immediate sensation during his lifetime, and as for half a century his works existed merely in manuscript, it might naturally be expected that many of them have been lost. And in point of fact the accounts given of them include several which we no longer possess. At the same time, when we compare the titles of the lost with the contents of those which survive, and take into account his general character as an author, we can scarcely hesitate to say, that the loss is not very material. The truth is, Goch moved in a very close and strictly defined sphere of thought, which he had formed for himself from Scripture, and his own experience of life, and in which his position, as the member of a Church in many respects corrupted, served to confirm him. With all his depth, vigour, and acuteness of mind, it is impossible to overlook a certain sameness. A few leading thoughts have dominion over him, and under various forms are constantly recurring in his writings. They relate to the normal dignity of Scripture, and the subordinate authority of theological teachers, to saving grace and justifying faith, to love based upon belief, and liberty as the offspring of love, and to the conditional value of all ecclesiastical works and obligations, especially of the Monastic vow. It is probable that Goch had elaborated his views upon these points in various ways, and reduced them to writing at first in the shape of mere sketches, then in a more detailed, and at last in a complete and comprehensive form. This

[1] e.g. in *Henke's* Gesch. der christl. Kirche. B. 2. s. 517, der 5ten Ausgabe, in *Erhard's* Gesch. des Wiederaufblühens wissenschaftlicher Bildung, B. i., in which two works John of Wesel, John Wessel, and other very inferior persons are brought forward, whereas *Goch* is not even mentioned.

explains the fact that among his writings, several are mentioned which, judging from their superscription, appear to have been of substantially the same import; nay it would seem that the topics of them were likewise identical with those chiefly discussed in the writings which survive. The first draughts were, doubtless, never intended for publication. Goch wrote them solely for his own use, or to shew to intimate friends. They were found, however, among the papers which he left, and therefore were inserted in the catalogue of his works. The *fuller expositions* were destined for a more extensive circulation, and hence were probably elaborated with greater care. It fortunately happens, that the works which have come down to us are chiefly of the latter description, viz., the two disquisitions, one upon *Christian liberty*, and the other upon the *Errors touching the Gospel Law*, and we may have the confident persuasion, that these are of themselves sufficient to enable us to form a correct and substantially complete view of his religious and theological opinions. What we have most to lament is the loss of a *Treatise on the state of the Soul after death*, which he seems to have left. It probably contained his views on Purgatory, and that is a subject on which, as well as on the whole matter of a future existence, little is said in his remains, although from the data they supply, we can have no difficulty in inferring what his convictions respecting the everlasting life really were.

In noticing Goch's writings,[1] we commence with those which are the most authentic, and which still *survive*. No doubt attaches to the disquisitions, *De Libertate Christianae Religionis*, and *De quatuor Erroribus circa Legem Evangelicam*, or to the *Epistola Apologetica, declarans quid de Scholasticorum scriptis et Religiosorum votis, et obligationibus sit censendum et tenendum*. These formed part of Goch's remains, or at least, while the remembrance of him was still fresh, they were given to the press

[1] About the writings of *Goch*, besides the Literary histories of Gesner, Cave, Foppens, and Fabricius, compare especially, Von d. *Hardt's* Autographa Lutheri Sive Antiqua literar. monim. autogr. t. ii. p. 76. Dav. Clem. *Gerdes* Biblioth. curieuse. t. ix. p. 194 sqq., and Christ. Guil. Franc. *Walch* in Monim. med. aev. vol. i. fasc. 4, vol. ii. fasc. 1. in the preface to each of the two fasciculi.

by learned men deeply interested in their author. By their contents and their form, they evince themselves the productions of one and the same mind, and that such a mind as tradition must lead us to infer Goch's was. Nor is there in the particulars they contain anything to awaken the suspicion of their having been interpolated. Respecting his other disquisitions, the earliest and most authentic source of information is *the Letter of the anonymous writer*, who probably between 1520 and 1530, or certainly not much later, set on foot a search for his literary remains in the Monastery Tabor itself. He took pains in the first place to find the conclusion of the book *De Libertate Christianâ*, which is wanting in the edition published in 1521, but without success. On the other hand, besides the treatises *De Libertate Christianâ* and *De quatuor Erroribus*, he found papers containing essays on the following subjects: *De Gratia et Meritis—De Fide et Operibus—De Perfectione Religionis Evangelicae.* Goch himself gives a hint that he had written a treatise upon the connexion of Thomism with Pelagianism,[1] and Walch also possessed other manuscripts under Goch's name, entitled *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio* and *De Gratia et Christiana Fide*, which it was his intention to have published.[2]

At an early period catalogues also were made of his writings. *Gesner's*[3] contains the following: *Epistola apologetica adv. quendam Praedic. Ord.—Dialogus de quat. erroribus circa legem evangelicam exortis,—De votis et religionibus factitiis, sive de libertate Christianae religionis conclusiones novem,—Insunt item huic operi fragmenta quaedam: de gratia et meritis, de fide et operibus, de perfectione legis evangelicae,—De libertate Christiana.*

[1] Dialog. de quat. errorib. cap. 17. p. 180: . . . quod Thomistae affirmant omnino negamus, immo falsum esse et haeresi Pelagianae vicinum dicimus, quod partim superius, *partim alias* copiosis et efficacibus autoritatibus et rationibus declaravimus.

[2] Monim. med. aev. vol. i. fasc. 4. Praefat. p. xxx. Praeter dialogum ejusque additamenta nihil ad manus meas pervenit, exceptis binis opusculis, quorum alterum de gratia et libero arbitrio: de fide et bonis operibus; alterum de gratia et Christiana fide, contra justitiam et merita operum exponit. Utrumque, si deo visum fuerit, alio tempore luce donare, animus est. I do not know that Walch ever really published the treatises.

[3] Biblioth. univ. Fig. 1545. p. 422.

Fabricuis[1] enumerates them thus: *De S. Scripturae dignitate et irrefragabili auctoritate, et quo judicio aliorum scripta, praesertim Scholasticorum et Philosophorum legenda sint, ad Engelbertum Ord. Praed.—De quat. error. circa leg. evang. exortis.—De votis et religionibus factitiis sive de libertate Christianae religionis, conclusiones novem.*

Foppens[2] gives us the following list which is the most complete:

De libertate Christianae religionis.
De gratia et fide.
De Scripturae sacrae dignitate.
De Scholasticorum scriptis.
De Statu animae post vitam.
De reparatione generis humani per Christum.
De votis et obligationibus.

Of these treatises, however, several, so far as the substance is concerned, may be identified with those which we still possess. The one *De Gratia et Fide* can scarcely have been different from the essays found by the anonymous person on the subject *De Gratia et Meritis* and *De Fide et Operibus*, or from that possessed by Walch, *De Gratia et Christiana Fide*, and can hardly have contained much important matter which is not still to be found in the book *De Libertate Christiana*. The two treatises, *De Scripturae sacrae dignitate*, and *De Scholasticorum scriptis*, are in like manner, and as respects their substance, preserved in the *Epistola apologetica*, for the first treats of the authority of Scripture, and the second, of the weight to be assigned to theological authors, and both subjects are elsewhere handled by Goch in detail, viz., in the book *De Libertate Christiana*. The work *De reparatione generis humani per Christum* is doubtless no longer extant, but the doctrine itself is fully stated in the main work, *De Libertate Christiana;* while the disquisition *De votis et obligationibus* may have been, and as the statement of Fabricius shews, probably was, identical with that work *De Libertate Christiana*, or more probably, as shown by Gesner and Foppens, with the *Dialogus de quatuor Erroribus*. This too bore the title, *Et de votis et religionibus*

[1] Biblioth. lat. med. et inf. aet. Lib. ix. t. iv. p. 228.
[2] Biblioth. belg. t. ii. p. 714 and 15.

tacticiis, and inasmuch as, although one of Goch's most important writings, it is not even mentioned in the catalogue of Foppens, there seems to be a natural ground for the supposition that it is the work meant by the title, *De votis et obligationibus*, and all the more, because this title gives a correct statement of its chief contents. In this manner, it is the disquisition *De statu animae post vitam*, with reference to which we have chief cause to lament, not merely a formal, but also a material loss.

Respecting the chronological order of the writings, we have no historical data, nor are there any grounds from which it would be easy to ascertain more than we have already attempted to conclude upon the subject. According to that, among the works extant, we reckon as the *earliest production*, the book *De Libertate Christiana*, although it was constructed out of several antecedent draughts upon the main topics connected with the subject, and therefore composed in his maturer years. *Next* would follow the more controversial and reformatory treatise *De quatuor Erroribus*, while as the *last of his productions*, being called forth by an attack on some of his earlier opinions, we place the *Epistola Apologetica*. The first editor Grapheus says of this, that it was written about 46 years prior to its publication.[1] If then we suppose it to have been published in 1521, and from that subtract 46, we have the year 1475, which was the last of Goch's life, so that with this apology he must have terminated his labours as an author.

We shall follow the same order, in mentioning the various editions of these writings. It is no doubt asserted by Foppens, that all which he enumerates were published in Germany. This statement, however, is very vague, and even untrue. The earliest editions, as can be easily proved, were set on foot, not in Germany but in the Netherlands. Moreover, the impressions of one or two treatises, if any such were ever made, appear to have been wholly lost, and we must therefore confine ourselves to what can be distinctly proved. And here we have to mention *first the Book upon Christian liberty*. *The only edition*, so far as is known to me, of this work, was brought out by Cor-

[1] Letter of Grapheus in *Walch* Monim. med. aev. vol. ii. fasc. 1. Praef. p. xii. xiii.

nelius *Grapheus*, at Antwerp 1521, in a medium form[1] between quarto and octavo. The title, ornamented with wood cuts, runs as follows :—

DE LIBER

TATE CHRISTIANA

prestantissimi Viri, Dñi Ioan
nis Pupperi Gocchiani.

Hic videre licebit De vario et multiplici intel-
lectu sacrae scripturae,
De libertate voluntatis et eiꝰ opationibus,
De eo in quo sit meritum humani operis,
De voto religionis longe aliter q̄ Thomas
aliiq ; scholastici tractarunt.

Introspice hospes, nam et hic dij sunt.
An. D. XXI. Mensis Martii.
CUM GRATIA et PRIVILEGIO.

The preface, the substance of which we have already communicated, bears the superscription : *Cornelius Grapheus omnibus fratribus vere Christianis ad Christianam libertatem anhelantibus, salutem in Christo Jesu, nostrae libertatis assertore*, and, at the conclusion, the date, *Antverpiae, Anno a Christiano natali MDXXI. Quarto Calendas Apriles.* Upon the last blank page of the three leaves which contain the preface stands the text, Ephes. iv. 14. The Treatise itself is headed : *Incipit Tractatus de libertate Christiane religionis V. patris D. Johannis Pupper de Goch, confessoris Moniulium apud Mechliniam in Thabor*, and occupies 124 leaves or 247 pages. At the close there stands

FINIS HORUM,
Reliqua desyderamus.
Antverpiae per Michaelem Hillenium,
in intersignio Rapi.

[1] *Gesner* also probably alludes to this edition, when he says, De libert. Christiana, liber impressus, sed ab auctore, ut videtur, non absolutus.

The type has many abbreviations, and here and there also some errors, but upon the whole is good and legible. A copy of this edition, which, for the sake of its great rarity,[1] I have thus fully described, exists in the Library kept in the hall of the great Church at Emden.[2]

Of the *Dialogus de quatuor erroribus circa legem evangelicam exortis et de votis et religionibus facticiis, the second in rank of Goch's treatises,* I have used the imprint inserted by *Walch* in his *Monimenta medii aevi vol. I. fasc. iv. Goetting.* 1760. It occupies 166 pages small octavo, and is to be found in that work from p. 73—239. At the end are appended *Conclusiones novem de Libertate Christianae religionis,* partly the results of what precedes, with other pieces less closely connected with it, as for instance *Notata de vita communi et libertate evangelica, de votis et evangelica paupertate, etc. Walch* believed that he was the first to bring this Dialogue to light by means of the press.[3] This, however, he afterwards discovered to be a mistake. He learned from Von der Hardt and others,[4] that the work had been printed before, and even, according to Von der Hardt's opinion, so early as 1520. The excuse, which in a very full and learned manner, Walch makes for himself, may be read in the preface to the first Fasciculus of the second part of the *Monimenta Med. Ævi,* page 7 sq. The old edition of the dialogue has never come under my inspection. The date of the impression is not given. There can, however, be no doubt, that it must be assigned to the same period as the one already

[1] Dan. *Gerdes* styles the writings of Goch in general *libros rarissimos;* Dav. Clemen. *Gerdes,* although he employed himself zealously in the search of them, could not obtain a sight of the book de libert. christ. *Walch.* Monim. ii. 1. Praef. p. x. Few moderns have ever seen it.

[2] Catalogue of all the books in the library of the great church at Emden 1836. Erstes Heft: Theologie S. 45. Num. 193. The library contains various works on Church history, especially the history of the Reformed churches, as well as of the Reformation in general.

[3] Monim. med. aev. i. 4. Praef. p. xxx.: Accedo ad dialogum, quem primum in conspectum doctorum a me proferri, mihi persuadeo.

[4] Autograph. Luther. vol. ii. p. 76. sqq. Even *Gesner* had already said, liber excusus in 4. chartis 13 et dimid.—Dan. *Gerdes* floril. libr. rarior. p. 110.—Sammlungen von alten und neuen Theol. Sachen. 1736. s. 499. Catalogue des livres imprimés de la biblioth. du Roi de France. t. ii. p. 42. Dav. Clem. *Gerdes* biblioth. cur. t. ix. p. 194.

mentioned of the book *De Libertate Christiana*, and therefore at the commencement of the third decennium of the 16th century.

The third work of Goch, which exists in print, is the *Epistola Apologetica, declaruns, quid de Scholasticorum scriptis et religioso rum votis et obligationibus sit censendum et tenendum.* It is also contained in *Walch*,[1] where it occupies only twenty-four pages. It was published, however, at a much earlier date, and by the zealous disseminator of the works and doctrines of Goch, viz. Cornelius *Grapheus*, under the title of *Epistola apologetica D. Johannis Gochii, Presbyteri, praefecti monialibus monasterii in Thabor celeberrimi oppidi Mechliniensis in Brabantia adversus quendam praedicatorii ordinis, super doctrina doctorum Scholasticorum et quibusdam aliis. Perlege Christiane lector, et tum judica.* This is, without doubt, the edition mentioned by *Gesner* as, *Impress. in Germania in* 4. *chart.* 2. *et dimid. Walch* gives[1] the *preface which Grapheus wrote* to this little work and addressed to Nicolaus von Herzogenbusch. Here he expresses the lively pleasure he took in the short, but at the same time pithy work, notices that it was written about forty-six years before, and thanks Nicolaus for sending to him the manuscript of it, accompanied with the assurance that it proceeded from the author's own hand;[3] "It was a particular satisfaction to him," he says, "to be instrumental in bringing to light so excellent an author," and he asks, "But where has he hid himself for such a length of time? In what corner has so pure a pearl hitherto remained concealed? Truly the good man deserved a better fate than to have been thrust by mischance into that rude and barbarous century; for he is said to have departed this life as early as the year 1475." According to these statements the *Epistola Apologetica* must have been the first of Goch's pieces edited by Grapheus, probably in the year 1520, but perhaps somewhat earlier. The preface gives the date as follows: *Antverpiæ, ex aedibus nostris, X. Calend.*

[1] Monim. med. aev. vol. ii. fasc. i. p. 1—24.

[2] Ibid. Praefat. p. xii.—xvii.

[3] . . . idque pervetusto charactere propria ipsius autoris manu (ut affirmabas) exaratum.

Sept. without the year. Then followed (but whether edited by *Grapheus* himself or not we do not know), the Treatise *De quatuor Erroribus*, and finally in March 1521, the work *De Libertate Christiana*, to which Grapheus wrote a cutting preface which provoked the anger of the Inquisitors. We can scarcely conceive the order to have been the reverse of this, and that *Grapheus* edited the work *De Libertate Christiana* first, for after he had been entangled in the process for heresy, and put into confinement, after he had in April 1522, and while still in prison, subscribed his recantation, we can not suppose that he would publish anything more from the pen of our author. It is very probable, therefore, that the order in which the three best known writings of Goch were published was the reverse of that in which they were at first composed by their author.

Besides these *a Fourth* work of Goch's has also appeared in print. Von der *Hardt*,[1] Dav. Clemens *Gerdes*,[2] and *Walch*[3] all mention it, and *Gerdes* had even the printed copy in his hands. The title is: *In divinæ gratiæ et Christianæ fidei commendationem, contra falsam et Pharisaicam multorum de justitiis et meritis operum doctrinam, et gloriationem, fragmenta aliquot D. Joannis Gocchii Mechliniensis, ante hac numquam excusa. Appendix aurea ex diversis, de gratia et libero arbitrio, de fide et bonis operibus; et quod non sint sine peccato, quomodo intelligitur. Indicem eorum, quæ hoc opusculo continentur, folio sequenti, lector, reperies. Ad Rom. X ignorantes dei justitiam et suam quaerentes statuere, justitiæ dei non sunt subjecti.* The copy which *Gerdes* had in his hand was printed *forma secunda* without assignation of the year. The Parisian catalogue mentions another copy with the year 1525. *Walch*, however, is not disposed to consider the notice as founded upon fact. This work of Goch's is also very rare, and I have never been able to obtain a sight of it. *Walch* had proposed to introduce it into his collection, but appears not to have executed his purpose, any more than in the reprint of the two Treatises *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, and *De gratia et Christiana fide.*

[1] Autogr. Luth. vol. ii. p. 76.
[2] Biblioth. cur. t. ix. p. 164.
[3] Monim. med. aev. ii. 1. Praef. p. x.

In fine, Von der *Hardt*[1] states that fragments of Goch's treatises *De gratia Divina et de Christiana fide* have also appeared in print, and assigns the publication to the year 1520; but of these likewise I have never succeeded in obtaining a sight.

[1] Autogr. Luth. vol. ii. p. 76. sqq. Comp. *Walch* monim. med. aev. ii. 1. Praefat. p. vii.

SECOND BOOK.

JOHN OF WESEL,

OR THE

NECESSITY FOR THE REFORMATION IN REFERENCE TO PARTICULAR THINGS IN THE CHURCH, ESPECIALLY INDULGENCES, AND THE CORRUPTION OF THE CLERGY.

I scorn the Pope, the Church, and Councils, and I extol Christ; let his Word dwell in us richly.—John of Wesel, in a sermon at Worms.

INTRODUCTION.

THE CHURCH OF THE WEST, AND IN PARTICULAR OF GERMANY, IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

In *John of Goch* we have made the acquaintance of a Theologian, who, being of a predominantly reflective nature, devoted himself almost exclusively to the contemplation of the more inward condition of the Christian body, traced the deep roots of its corruption, and pondered upon the remedies which would prove most effectual for renovating its spirit and general tendency. In *John of Wesel*, the person to whom we now pass, we find a man possessed of a more practical turn of mind, and who, for that reason, directs his chief attention to the Church's external condition, combats its manifest corruptions, and endeavours to apply his hand at once to the task of its improvement. At the same time, having been born upon the Rhine, and having devoted his whole labours to his native land, he points our view principally to *Germany*; and as we cannot form a just estimate of his character, without taking into account the state of the Church with which he was connected, he will thus become our guide to a fuller acquaintance with the ecclesiastical affairs of that country.

It is not to subjects of science or of doctrine that our attention will here be called, but rather to the *constitution of the Church*. The task and labour of our forefathers, till the time of the Reformation, were directed to the improvement, not so much of Theology or Philosophy, as of the State, and its relation to the hierarchy. The Germans, at the first, embraced the religion of Jesus Christ practically with the heart. This peculiar relationship to Christianity, however, developed itself among them in two directions. Of these, one was more inward, penetrating to

the depths of the spirit, and was pursued by men of a contemplative nature; the other was more outward, with application to life, and was taken by men of an active turn. The inward practical direction produced the Theology of experience or Mysticism, which, while the cultivation of Logic in the Schools chiefly occupied the Romanic nations, nourished and satisfied the German heart, and especially in the 15th century, after the decline of Scholasticism came to be sensibly felt, manifested itself more and more victorious, and influential for the future, as the "German Theology." The other externally-practical drift bore principally upon the Church, and originated a lively and active interest in its constitution and government. And inasmuch as, in consequence of the position assumed by the German Empire in the middle ages, the great questions of the day, those, to wit, respecting the spiritual and temporal powers, were debated between Germany and Rome, we find a multitude of noble and active minds devoting their life, or at least a considerable portion of their labours, to the evolution of this relationship. No doubt the bond of Christian union was then twined around all the nations of Europe, and we do not mean to affirm, either that the Germans take no part in the cultivation of Scholasticism, or that the Theologians of other nations, especially the great Frenchmen of the 15th century, did nothing to modify the condition of the Church. Generally, however, and on a large scale, the case was the reverse of that which we find in modern times, for science fell more to the lot of the French, and politics to that of the Germans. In the ranks of the men distinguished for practical activity, *John of Wesel* occupies a place, and he, therefore, diverts our course away from the other main bent of the German mind, viz., that to Mysticism, and directs it chiefly to the ecclesiastical affairs of the period. In order, however, to form a correct notion of the existing state of things, especially in reference to the hierarchy, we must necessarily revert to the remote past.

1. THE GROWTH AND BLOSSOM OF THE HIERARCHY.

Whoever intends to depict the ecclesiastic affairs of the middle ages, finds himself inevitably involved in the political. Nor is

the reverse of this statement less true: Church and State are inseparately conjoined. This is especially the case from the Carlovingian era, and during the whole course of German history. The Empire evolved itself by the side of the Papacy, and the Papacy simultaneously with the Empire. Each presupposes the other. Their mutual relation and reciprocal influence constitute the great heart throbs in all the transactions of the middle ages. Both powers, although representing different tendencies and interests, rise together, and contemporaneously stand side by side in the full blossom of their prosperity, partly combatting, and partly implementing and supporting each other, and both of them, in the same century, although from different causes and in different degrees, begin to decline. Of all this let us here attempt at least a sketch.

The German Church, as is well known, was founded at first in dependence upon Rome. At the time when Christianity was successfully spread between the Rhine and the Elbe, the Bishop of Rome was recognized as the undoubted primate of the West, the central and connecting point in establishing and organizing the Church. For this reason, the pious and stout-hearted men in the British monasteries, who felt the impulse to carry the Gospel to their kinsmen on the continent, betook themselves, with few exceptions, to Rome, in order to receive consecration for the labours they were to prosecute, and for the oversight of the Churches they were to collect. In this manner Germany was brought at once into the ecclesiastical organism of which Rome was the centre. The same deep devotion with which they embraced Christianity, the Germans likewise paid to the visible head of the Church. No nation was ever more submissive to the Romish chair, because with them submission rested upon a deep religious and moral foundation. For the same reason, however, when their piety and moral sense were scandalized by the secularized hierarchy, no nation ever waged with Rome a more angry, persevering, and general war.

The superior authority of the Roman Bishop among the Western nations was founded upon a variety of traditional grounds. The cause, however, which was chiefly instrumental in building up the politico-ecclesiastical power of the Papacy, was the connexion of the Romish chair with the Carlovingian

family. In terminating the shadowy dominion of the Merovingians, Pepin leant, on the one side, upon the will of the people expressed at the diet of the Empire, which was a substantial power, and, on the other, upon the sanction of the Romish Bishop, the champion of the Church, a power purely ideal, but reverenced at the time as the Divine authority visible upon earth. This fact was fraught with vast consequences in the history of the world. It laid a foundation for the opinion, that it was in the competence of the Romish Bishop to withhold the higher consecration from one prince and to bestow it upon another, and Gregory VII. did not fail to cite the case against Henry IV.[1] From that time, the most intimate alliance was formed between the Romish chair and the new dynasty, as the powers aspiring to the dominion of Europe. It was again a bishop of Rome by the word of whose mouth the Western Empire, then practically extinct, was transferred to one who had sufficient strength to uphold it, viz., Charlemagne, and Charlemagne, in his turn, elevated the Roman Bishop to the rank of a great and wealthy ecclesiastical prince. In this manner, the Western Empire and the Papacy arose side by side, and with the mutual help of each other.

Even under Charlemagne, the Church occupied an important position, closely connected with the life of the State, as is proved by the Capitularies which relate to ecclesiastical matters. The commanding spirit of this monarch, however, repressed every attempt on the part of the clergy at intrusion into the civil domain, and endeavoured rather to guide them back to their apostolic vocation.[2] He also kept his strong hand over Rome, and the Pope, who was really nothing more than the first Bishop of the Empire, and subject in temporal things to him whom he had called to its throne.

This relation, however, took a different shape under Charle-

[1] The words of Gregory are: Alius Romanus Pontifex Regem Francorum, non tam pro suis iniquitatibus, quam pro eo, *quod tantae potestati non erat utilis*, a regno deposuit et Pipinum Caroli M. Imperatoris patrem in ejus loco substituit, omnesque Francigenas a juramento fidelitatis, quod illi fecerant, absolvit.

[2] Comp. especially the very characteristic 2d Capitulary of A.D 811. T. i. p. 479 in Baluzius, especially § 2, 5, 11.

magne's successors. The constitution of the Church underwent a change. The supreme head of the civil authority became weak, that of the spiritual increased in strength. The aristocratic metropolitan constitution, invented in the East, had at first been introduced among the Western nations, simultaneously with Christianity, but had not attained to right vigour. Now, however, when the Bishops found it their interest to evade or resist the authority of their own Archbishops, by connecting themselves with the Bishop of Rome, that authority was more and more undermined. Upon the foundation of the primitive aristocracy an ecclesiastical monarchy took its rise. To this evolution the Decretals of Isidore, in the 9th century, largely contributed. A product of the tendency of the age, these Decretals helped in an important way to strengthen the tendency from which they sprang, inasmuch as by a mixture of genuine and spurious records, which there was no criticism to detect, they practically exhibited the idea of the Church as an independent commonwealth, superior to the State, but governed by the arbitrary will of the Romish Bishop. Circumstances were peculiarly favourable for the introduction of this notion. The posterity of Charlemagne lacked their great ancestor's genius for government, and even under Louis the Pious, the Bishop of Rome could aspire to settle the dispute between the Emperor and his rebellious sons, by asserting the principle, that the rule of the Pope over the souls of men is superior to the temporal dominion of the Monarch. It is true, that Lothario attempted to recover the imperial privileges. The canonical election of the Pope was to be ratified by the Emperor, to whom also the Romans were to swear allegiance ;[1] But Popes were consecrated before the sanction of the Emperor was obtained, and his sway at Rome continued to fluctuate.

The Papacy, however, was destined to celebrate its triumphs only after mighty conflicts. At the division of the kingdom of the Franks, the imperial sceptre passed into German hands. By this means, Germany became the centre of all politico-ecclesias-

1 "I promise," such is the form of the oath, "that I will be faithful and obedient all my life to the Emperors Louis and Lothario, yet without prejudice to the oath by which I am already bound to my Lord the Pope."

tical affairs; whereas in France, as we have observed, the cultivation of science became the chief interest. Under the great Saxon Emperors, Henry I. and Otho I., the foundations of the stability and order of the German Empire were laid. In the election of these Emperors, the clergy had no determining voice. On the contrary, Henry rather kept the ecclesiastics in obedience and submission, and even in Italy, Otho reasserted, and when necessary by force of arms and in opposition to the Pope, the rights which he had inherited from his Carlovingian ancestors. Under the pornocracy *(government of harlots)* in the first half of the 10th century, the Papacy was degraded and all Italy torn by factions. Otho I. established order, and appointed a Pope, and thenceforward the elections continued to take place under the predominating influence of the German Emperors. In the state in which things were at the time, and when the Emperors happened to be virtuous men, this was a good arrangement. It did not, however, correspond with the idea of the Church and the Papacy, in the shape which these had assumed, and it was pernicious in its consequences, when the imperial influence was opposed to the Church's higher interests. In that case, the Church was secularised, her head dishonoured, the clergy corrupted, and a reaction rendered inevitable. And at last a reaction came, as is well known, under Henry IV., the third of the Franconian Emperors. Henry's father and predecessor, Henry III. had, without challenge, appointed to all vacant ecclesiastical offices, and even several of the Popes had been raised by his good pleasure to the Romish chair. On its becoming vacant in 1048, an embassy from Rome had supplicated him to appoint a person to fill it, when he selected the Bishop of Toul.[1] In the reign of this Pope, Leo IX., a monk from the monastery of Clugny arrived at Rome, and under several of his successors, prosecuted a powerful reaction in favour of the Papal authority, until at length as Gregory VII. he completed the work.

The Papacy, already vividly possessed with the notion of a universal theocracy, had long beheld itself out-flanked by the Empire. To this humiliation it was compelled to submit, during

[1] A man who was related to him by the mother's side.

the life time of the stern and resolute Henry III.[1] Shortly after his death, however, Alexander II. mounted the Papal throne without the imperial sanction, and all things became more and more ripe for restoring to the Church and its head an independent position. The institution of an elective college secured freedom and order in the choice and appointment of the Pope. Laws were promulgated against simony, and zealous endeavours made for a reformation of the morals of the clergy, and a consequent increase of their respectability and weight. While the Church was thus strengthening itself inwardly, the imperial sceptre passed into inexperienced and unsteady hands. Henry IV., although gifted by nature with excellent qualities, was yet badly trained and badly advised, and in the impetuosity of youth, committed faults on every side. In particular, he grossly abused the imperial power in appointing to ecclesiastical offices, thereby exposed many weak points to the far-reaching sagacity of Gregory VII., and allowed his imperatorial energy, now in arms against him, to acquire an immeasurable ascendancy. The conflicts betwixt the two are well known. Gregory, after great triumphs, died in exile, and Henry, crowned at Rome by a rival Pope of his own appointment, vindicated his cause in arms. It is not, however, always upon battle-fields that victories are decided. The principles which Gregory defended were entwined with the most powerful tendencies in the progress of society; and when he fled from Rome, they took possession of the world.[2] His attempts, whose sole object at the first was probably the emancipation and independence of the Church, aspired in the sequel at realizing the idea of a universal Christian theocracy, as alone adequate to implement the conception of the Papacy and satiate the ambitious spirit of the man who then occupied its throne. A balance of powers appeared an impossibility. It behoved that one should predominate, and as the Papacy had hitherto been dependent on the Empire, their relation was henceforward to be reversed, the temporal was to serve,

[1] Nevertheless, by the advice of Hildebrand, Leo IX., having been nominated by the Emperor, had come to Rome, not as Pope, but as Pilgrim, and was styled Pope only after he was elected at Rome to the office.

[2] Expressions of *Ranke* in his excellent, Deutschen Geschichte im Zeitalter der Reformation. Th. i. s. 33.

the spiritual to reign, and the Pope to stand at the head of the family of Christian nations, as the Divinely appointed and commissioned Father, dispensing all the gifts and graces both of heaven and of earth. There is grandeur, no doubt, in the conception, and it was no common spirit which ventured to devise, and carry it into effect. Human nature, however, is insufficient for the task of realizing it, and at all events, the attempt was only practicable at a time of relative political and ecclesiastical immaturity, when the energies of nations were yet in a state of powerful fermentation. At such a time it is impossible to overlook the high consequence of the Papacy. It was capable of being a shield to the oppressed, and by mitigating the violence of the temporal sword, and inspiring the dread of a higher power, a bulwark of public freedom. Such was in fact the position occupied by the Popes, when they understood their vocation. Moreover, the Papacy was better adapted, than any mere political power, to restore among the European nations the union requisite for their collective development, and to serve at the time as some compensation for the want of the vastly enlarged means of intercourse which are now enjoyed. In fine, as we have already had occasion to observe, the Papacy was to a certain extent useful, as a system of discipline. If Christianity was destined once more to become a law to the rude nations, and gradually to train them for the enjoyment of the liberty of the Gospel, it was requisite that a powerful and Divinely authorized defender of the law should take the lead, and who was competent for the task but the Head of the Church, whose office it is to enforce moral discipline? In this manner, for a certain age, and within proper limits, the Papacy was a necessity, and was felt to be so by the nations, for at the first they adhered to it in the strength of conviction, and for many centuries could not be brought to renounce it even by the worst of the Popes. But times changed, and the Papacy did not restrain itself within due bounds. Raised to a still loftier height by the general commotion of the Crusades, which they set on foot, and in which, as the heads of the Church militant, and the supreme governors of the Germanico Roman Commonwealth, they took the lead, the Popes encroached more and more upon the political sphere, and raised up a domination which rivalled that of the Empire, even when most powerfully represented.

Two systems were formed and contended for in a keen and universal war, the imperial Gibelline, which sought to vindicate for the head of the Empire, Divine authenticity and independence, and the Papo-Italian, which made the Pope absolute and supreme even in temporal things; and for a time at least the latter was completely victorious. The Pope became, in fact, the Sun in the Christian world, while the Emperor was only the Moon. The temporal sword appeared as if merely lent to him by the Church, that he might use it in her cause, and according to her good pleasure;[1] and alas for him when he did otherwise! Upon this pinnacle of theocratic glory we behold Innocent III., and several more both of his predecessors and successors. Entangling itself, however, with politics and temporalities, the Papacy fell from its moral and patriarchal dignity, and by degrees became thoroughly secularised.[2] The Pope, originally the protector of the persecuted, became more and more a persecutor himself. In place of uniting the nations, he irritated them against each other, and sowed discord between subjects and their rulers. His importance as an educator vanished with the growth of national civilization and independence. The pupil advanced while the master remained behind, and this gave birth to a discrepancy which continually increased. Even the Crusades, which at first were so greatly instrumental in elevating the Papal power, turned at last to its destruction, by helping to call forth new states of the world and

[1] Thoughts, which run through the whole middle ages, but in particular are openly avouched in the well-known Bull *Unam Sanctam* of Boniface VIII.

[2] This cannot be more beautifully expressed than in the words of the sublime Poet of the mediæval Catholic Church, the great Gibelline *Dante*, in the 16th canto of his Purgatorio—

> . . . Rome, that turned it into good,
> Was wont to boast *two suns* whose several beams
> Cast light on either way, the world's and God's.
> *One* since hath quenched the *other;* and the sword
> Is grafted on the crook, and so conjoined
> Each must perforce decline to worse, unawed
> By fear of other. If thou doubt me, mark
> The blade. Each herb is judged of by its seed.
> On this at last conclude. The Church of Rome,
> Mixing two governments that ill assort,
> Hath missed her footing, fallen into the mire,
> And there herself and burden much defiled.

society, which, in some instances, were hostile to the Church. The more imperious the Papacy outwardly appeared, the more rapidly and surely it hastened to its fall.

2. THE DECLINE OF THE PAPACY.

Boniface VIII. forms a turning point. Proud and daring above all other Popes, he endured worse humiliation than any, and died insane. What the heroic energy of the Hohenstaufens attempted in vain was successfully achieved by the prudent daring of a French monarch, when the times had changed, and the popular power leagued itself with the crown. Philip the Fair, after defying Boniface, prevailed upon Clement V. to transfer his seat to France. This step broke to a great extent the ancient power of the Papacy. The lustre which the eternal city had lent to it vanished. Instead of being both an independent monarch, and a spiritual authority, encompassed by temporal lords, and exercising an imposing effect upon all, the Pope fell under the influence of a French King, and became in some degree a mere instrument of the policy of France. The Gibellines, the champions of the Empire, arose more boldly than ever, and taught men, by Scripture and example, to resist the Papal decrees.[1] Without relinquishing the smallest of its ancient claims, though stript of inward dignity and outward splendour, the Papacy entered upon another and most ruinous course, which in a great measure alienated from it the minds of all well-disposed and intelligent men. It applied itself to the acquisition of wealth. A system of financial speculations was invented, and cast like a net around all possible things. About the Papal chair all was venal. To suffer the Emperor of Germany to be dependent upon a Papacy of such a character appeared too great a disgrace even to those Electoral princes, who formerly had often taken the Pope's side against him, and hence, in the year 1338, they came to the resolution, that whosoever was chosen by a majority of the electors, should, with or without the sanction of

[1] Even men like *Dante*, thoroughly catholic and theoretically attached to the hierarchy, not only expose the errors of the Popes, but also those of the secularized Papacy.

the Pope, immediately be acknowledged Emperor.[1] About the same time, another element of opposition arose in the young and aspiring class of citizens, who were the natural allies of the Empire. Nay—even within the Church itself, many a voice was heard, and many a party came forward, bitterly reproaching the secularised hierarchy, and putting them to shame by holding up to their view the pattern of the Apostles. Supported by auxiliaries like these, Louis of Bavaria was able to contemn the Papal interdict, repeatedly issued against him.

Still more sensibly, did the Schism, produced by the exile of Avignon, wound the Papacy in its roots. During a period of upwards of thirty years, in which there were two or there Popes mutually attacking, excommunicating, reviling, and heaping every possible dishonour upon each other, all the nerves of the Papal authority were dissevered, and the Christian world thrown into interminable confusion. The ruinous course formerly adopted by the one Pope, was now pursued by several. There was no end to the pecuniary exactions, and no one was so dull as not to feel that things could not continue as they were. It was this state of matters which, in the first half of the 15th century, called into existence the General Councils. Their task was to restore ecclesiastical unity, and thoroughly amend the state of the Church, so as to prevent in future the recurrence of such abuses. For both of these purposes, the General Councils, as an independent representation of the Church, required to possess an unlimited and supreme judicial and legislative authority. Such an authority was, in fact, vindicated for them, by the most intelligent men of both the Universities and the Church, and on the strength of such an authority did the Ecclesiastical Assemblies of Constance and Basle transact their business and promulgate their decrees. They established the principle that there should exist in the Church a free legislative body of representatives, and that to them, as an essential part of its constitution,[2] should be committed the task of its reformation, both in its head and members. All seemed to promise that a

[1] *Ranke*, deutsche Gesch. im Zeitalter der Reformation. Th. i. s. 45 ff.

[2] There are in von der *Hardt* T. iv. p. 86 and 96 several decrees of the *Ecclesiastical Synod of Constance* which are classcial in this respect. They were passed in Sess. quart. of the 30th March 1415 and in Sess.

complete transformation of the Papacy was about to be effected within the Church itself, and that the sovereign and unlimited authority, which it had hitherto wielded, would be reduced to a subordinate, and greatly circumscribed one, by the introduction into the ecclesiastical organism of a reformatory and representative power. The Papacy, however, survived, outwardly at least, even this blow. From the rights, which in the course of centuries it fancied itself to have secured, it did not swerve a foot's breadth, and by violent measures succeeded in keeping down the opposition raised by the advocates of the representatative system. But even although suppressed, that opposition continued an important spiritual power. Hitherto the conflicts of the Church had been waged with external adversaries; now in her own bosom two powerful parties took opposite sides, the one advocating the old, and the other the new principles. Both of them from different points of view set up systems of their own respecting the Papacy, the old party, the so-called Papal, the new party, the representative system. The leading ideas which these respectively involve are as follows:

3. THE IDEA OF THE PAPACY ACCORDING TO THE RIVAL SYSTEMS.

The *Papal system* contemplated the Pope as the rightful Lord and Monarch of the whole world, from whom emanate all power and jurisdiction even of a temporal kind, to whom it pertains to set up and overthrow kingdoms, and who is consequently the supreme and transcendent authority on earth. The advocates of this view,[1] founding upon the notion of a vice-

quint. of the 6th April of the same year, and confirm the authority of Councils as supreme in the Church. The same may be said of the decree *Frequens* of the 9th Oct. 1417 in von der *Hardt* T. iv. p. 1435, which enjoins their stated recurrence. Comp. also the Decrees T. i. p 650.

[1] The advocates of this opinion are Johannes de *Turrecremata*, Magister S. Palatii, a Dominican, who took an active part in the Councils of Basle and Florence, and died as cardinal in the year 1468. See his Summa de Ecclesia et ejus auctoritate Lib. iv. esp. Lib. i. de Potestate Papali and Lib. iii. de Conciliis. Rodericus *Sancius*, Bishop of Zamora and papal Referendary, in the Speculum vitae humanae, edited Rome

gerency of the Divine Being, on this lower world, and of its being committed to the Pope, affirmed that there is no human power superior to the Papal; but on the contrary that the Papal is superior to every other. It extends over the whole world, and no believer is exempt from it. In the Pope the temporal and spiritual authorities are conjoined. He stands at the summit of both,[1] and even in secular matters, possesses that measure of might and jurisdiction which is salutary for the Church and its members, and requisite for the punishment of sinners. In virtue of this might, he has the right to depose negligent or rebellious princes. Of the Church he is the supreme Judge, and the source from which jurisdiction emanates. He judges all, and is judged by none. In like manner, he is the owner and fountain of Episcopal authority. Indeed all authority in the Church is derived from him. The other prelates and clergy are but his plenipotentiaries, and at any moment he can take their places, and do directly whatever he had commissioned them to do for him. He is the shepherd of the whole Church, and as every shepherd stands above the flock entrusted to his charge, so is the Pope superior to the whole Church. Hence even the authority of Councils depends upon him. He convokes, and superintends them, and gives validity to their decrees. There can therefore be no appeal from the Pope to a Council, but there may be an appeal from a Council to the Pope. He has the right to reject, to cashier and excommunicate Councils, which have caused mischief or disturbance. In fine, the Pope is also the universal teacher of the Church. It is his part to determine what pertains to the faith, to interpret authentically the sense of Scripture, and to try, and either approve or reject, the statements of individual teachers on matters of doctrine. His official decisions on such points are not subject to error,

1468, Strasburg 1507, more particularly the 2d Book. Dominicus *Venetus*, Bishop of Brixen in 1475, in his work de Cardinalium legitima creatione, and in other treatises, printed in Marci Antonii de Dominis de republica eccles. T. i. Theodorus *Laelius*, Bishop of Feltre, in his controversial pamphlet against Gregory of Heimburg, Pro Pio Papa ii. et sede Romana, in *Goldast* Monarch. S. Rom. Imp. T. ii. p. 1595. There are extracts from the three above-mentioned authors in *Gieseler* ii. 4. s. 218 seq. The sequel will contain further notices of Theodorus Laelius.

[1] Utriusque potestatis apicem tenet says Turrecremata.

for it is proper that that Church, which is the corner-stone of all the rest, should be Divinely endowed with the peculiar gift of infallibility.

The *Representative*, or as it is also called, the *Monarchic-aristocratical*, system offers a decided antithesis to most of these averments.[1] Without rejecting the idea of the Papacy as the basis of Ecclesiastical unity, it insisted that, in place of the purely absolute monarchy of the Papal system, a system involving material limitations should be substituted. The principle on which it rested was, that power in the Church is not derived from the Pope, but that the power of the Pope is derived from the Church; and from that principle, all the other parts of the system resulted by natural inference. The plenitude of spirit and of power—said its advocates—is seated originally in the Church. The Church devolves the supreme government of its affairs upon the Pope, but always under the condition, that it shall be conducted for the edification and good of the general body. He is not the Lord of the Church; he is only the administrative head.[2] The Church as a whole is always superior to the Pope, who is himself but one of its members. The Church, however, is constitutionally represented by General Councils. It is through these that she acts, and what is true of the Church is also true of them. To none but to the Church collectively, and the Councils representing it, has the promise been given of superiority to error, as the consequence of the guidance of Christ and the Holy Spirit. The Pope, being a fallible man,[3] may err and abuse his power to the Church's detriment. There must therefore exist

[1] It was defended by the Councils of Constance and Basle, and by a succession of distinguished Theologians, among whom the French occupy the foremost rank, but which contains also Dutchmen and even Italians. Its most distinguished representative is *Gerson*, in a work written during the sitting of the Council of Constance, de Potestate ecclesiast. Consid. Opp. ed. du Pin T. ii. p. 246. Next to him we must place Nicolaus von *Cusa*, who afterwards became a convert to the Papacy. His work is entitled, De Concordantia cathol. Lib. ii. iii. in *Schardii* Syntagma tractatuum, p. 356. There are numerous Treatises on the subject in Von der *Hardt's* Hist. Concil. Constant. We shall ourselves afterwards notice several men of this school. See extracts in *Gieseler* ii. 4, S. 209 ff.

[2] caput ministeriale, the highest servant.

[3] homo peccabilis.

some superior authority for securing the Church's interest, and that is lodged in General Councils which act in its behalf. If General Councils, however, are to effect their object, they must be invested with a supreme judicial and legislative authority. An appeal may certainly be taken from the Pope to the Church, or, which is the same thing, to a General Council. The Church, constitutionally represented, has a right to judge the Pope, and when he falls into heresy or other offences manifestly injurious to its interests, even to oppose him, but the Pope cannot judge the whole Church. The Church and its representatives are also competent to enact laws binding upon the Pope, both as an individual, and as the Church's head, whereas the ordinances of the Pope derive their whole force from the assent of the Church and her Councils. The Episcopal authority does not emanate from that of the Pope, with which it has the same foundation and source; for if the Pope be Peter's successor, no less are the Bishops the successors of the other Apostles, upon whom, no less than upon Peter, Christ conferred the power of the keys, and all higher gifts, and through them upon the whole Church. In the same way the temporal power of princes does not flow from the spiritual power of the Pope, but is an independent institution and ordinance of God.

The Church has often anticipated the State in the modifications it has undergone, and it is evident that there was now in operation within its bosom an antagonism similar to that which was afterward manifested in the political sphere. Just as in modern times, it was said by Louis XIV., "I am the State," so, according to the sense of his conclave, might the Pope have said, "I am the Church;" and just as Frederick the Great called himself "the first servant of the State," so, in the sense of the representative system, might the Pope have called himself the Church's ministerial head or chief servant. According to the Papal system, a position, absolute, superhuman, and which sets him on a level with God and Christ, is assigned to the Pope, as the vicar of God. He is exalted to the summit of all terrestrial might, and as Christ possessed within himself the power to institute the Church, so in like manner there is an indwelling power in the Pope, to emit the Church which is substantially hierarchical from himself. He always constitutes the Church. It exists on his account.

He is at every moment exalted above it, and wields over it an unlimited control. The representative system gives the Pope a position consonant with the real nature of things. It looks upon him as a human being subject to error and sin. It makes him the Church's creature, and not the Church his. It considers him as existing for the Church's sake, and not the Church as existing for his, and subordinates him as a member, the highest but still a ministerial member, to the will and purposes of the whole. This system, consonant with the principles of progress and reformation, which had actually penetrated into the Church, was manifestly better adapted to actual life, and appeared also to promise a bright future. It involved, however, an internal defect. It sought to retain the idea of the Papacy, while it tore up its foundations, and outwardly it had an unequal conflict to sustain with the hierarchy, which was still powerful, and commanded vast material resources. The Papal system had the privilege of possession, but as it demanded for the Popes a Church such as no longer existed, and for the Church Popes such as could not be found, it stood in glaring contradiction with reality, and its pretentions sounded like mockery, when the mind turned from the absolute infinity of the idea to the littleness of the persons in whom it was embodied.

4. THE PAPACY AS IT REALLY WAS IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

The persons who, in the course of the 15th century, represented the transcendental idea of the Papacy advocated by the Roman courtiers, were very far from having preserved those lofty sentiments and that personal dignity, which in several of the ancient Popes had so imposing an effect, and might still have been able to reconcile the more matured minds of men with an authority aristocratic in its nature, but at the same time wielded with a paternal spirit, and an eye to the interests of the Church. Scarcely had the illustrious Council of Constance succeeded in once more giving to the Church a single head in the person of Martin V. when this crafty man commenced making use of his newly acquired power for the purpose

of defeating the schemes so long and universally cherished, and so frankly and zealously advocated, especially by the nations on the north of the Alps. With a show of courtesy, he by no means refused that reformation of the Church in its head and members, which all Europe longed for and required, but he deferred it, and in the meanwhile strengthened the old abuses, in the first instance by the regulations of chancery which he adopted immediately after his accession, and then by the concordats into which he entered with the several nations. The very Pope, who owed his existence to a Council invested with the highest ecclesiastical authority, forbade at once all appeals from Popes to General Councils, and used every effort to liberate the Papacy from the restraints which the Representative system, acted upon at Constance, laboured to impose. In the face of endeavours after reformation on the part of almost all Western Christendom, he recommenced the old pecuniary exactions, and although, as Cardinal, he had borne a high character for benignity and gentleness, he departed this life († 1431) with the reputation of being a greedy miser. The ecclesiastical Council which, after many long delays and fruitless intermediate attempts, was at last convoked at Basle, was generally expected to help the Church, but its intrepidity, independent spirit, and deep and earnest zeal for substantial ecclesiastical improvement, soon brought it into irremediable discord with Martin's successor, Eugene IV. The opposition, conducted by men of the highest distinction, such as Nicolaus von Cusa and Aeneas Sylvius, achieved the most brilliant success, and was able for a time to bid defiance to the tottering Papacy. The questionable expedient, however, of electing a rival Pope, and other circumstances, prepared their downfall, and Eugene IV. had gained the mastery, when he died in the year 1447. In spite of its noble efforts, able discussions and salutary decrees, the Council of Basle left behind it little more than the impression of its spirit upon the minds of cotemporaries, and a great memorial in history. The object it was designed to accomplish, and the actual fruits of its reforming principles, were again lost, especially for Germany, by the Concordat of Aschaffenburg or Vienna, negotiated for Nicolaus V. with the weak Emperor Frederick III., and to the great advantage of the Papal chair, by the

shrewd Aeneas Sylvius, who had in the mean while changed his views. Nicolaus V. may, in other ways, have acquired great merit, especially as a friend of science, and a patron of the learned men who fled from Greece. This was more a personal matter. As Pope, like all the rest, he made it his main object to resist and crush the efforts at reform, and during his reign, (Nicolaus † 1445) we hear earnest men uttering bitter and despairing complaints of the hopelessness of thoroughly remodelling the Church. His successor, Calixtus III., guided by the advice of Aeneas Sylvius, and receiving from Frederick III. ready aid in the suppression of religious liberty, could even venture to advance the arrogant principle, that the authority of the Apostolic chair, being in all respects free, could be bound by no treaties, and had consented to the Concordats only by way of special grace. But, as is usual with apostates, the most zealous in pushing these principles was Pius II. (between 1458 and 1464), a man of splendid talents, and highly accomplished in science, of large experience and liberal views in life, and capable of accomplishing the greatest enterprises, if his genius had only been seconded by a corresponding character. Once the leader of the movement for reform, Pius II., apostatising from himself, destroyed all that, as Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, he had helped to do for the good of the Church, and in the most solemn manner revoked the principles which, in the Council of Basle, he had advocated with intrepidity and eloquence. He hoped, by an imitation of the great Papal models, to restore the ancient glory of the Romish chair, not reflecting that the times were changed, and that he, who expects to awaken conviction and interest in the bosom of others, must first feel them in his own. His artful and designing policy failed to produce any great or extensive effect. The assembly of princes he convoked at Mantua (in 1459) for the purpose of setting on foot a new crusade, under the guidance of the Pope, only served to show how completely the taste for such enterprises had died away, and afforded to the opposition an opportunity of charging him with ambitious and mercenary designs. The condemnation, with which at this assembly he branded every appeal from the Pope to a General Council, was far from being followed with the desired success ; on the contrary, from that time forward the appeals were numerous and strong, as for

instance that of Gregory of Heimburg. The bull of retractation, dated 1463, by which, comparing himself with Augustine, he condemned his former sentiments and views, could not obviate the doubts entertained respecting him, and served rather to excite indignation, than to reconcile the contradictions which his life displayed. In this manner, Pius II. disappeared, like a phantom († 1464), and notwithstanding the vast resources of his mind, was not successful in effecting a new creation. His successor, Paul II., a zealous persecutor of the Hussites, likewise devoted his chief exertions to the task of confirming the absolute power of the Papacy. The attempt entangled him in a variety of disputes, in the midst of which he died in 1471.

Of all the fore-mentioned Popes it must be admitted that they pursued, as an objective aim, the elevation of the Romish chair; not so a long series of their successors. Morally unworthy, and devoted to mere secular and selfish ends, these men attest the corruption of the Romish court, especially of the conclave, while they served to degrade the Papacy still deeper in public opinion. Sixtus IV. (1471—84) strove for almost nothing but the aggrandizement of his family, and was thus betrayed into measures which occasioned the greatest disturbances in Italy, nor could the patronage he bestowed upon the sciences shield him from contempt. Innocent VIII., addicted to the same vice of nepotism, and induced by the number of his posterity to practice it to a still greater extent, was also the originator of prosecution for witchcraft, and actively promoted the sale of Indulgences, the abuses of which had already reached a high pitch († 1492). But all former unworthy and scandalous occupants of the chair were outdone by the profligate Borgia, Alexander VI. He and his whole family, polluted by lust and murder, stand in history as a revolting instance of impiety, and if ever there was a glaring contradiction between what a man required by his position to have been, and what he actually was, it was exhibited by Alexander. Dying in 1503, he closes the series of St Peter's successors in the 15th century. There was none among them who had the power, or, if the power, the inclination and will, to remodel, in an improved and nobler style, the old and tottering fabric, a task which would have required some original mind. Even the more virtuous (and the most distinguished of

all, Pius II., was not altogether free from reproach on the score of morality[1]), by the use of overstrained and violent means to uphold what could no longer stand, helped to originate a counteraction on the part of the opposition, which was kept down, but not at all annihilated; while the immoral and wholly unworthy, as they were themselves an evidence of the deep debasement of the Papal court, accelerated still more the catastrophe, which was being prepared by the force of circumstances and the progress of education. All conspired to show that in the Papacy, as it actually was, there was no salvation.

5. THE CLERGY AND THE MONKS.

If we look farther around us, we shall find that the case was little better with the high clergy, than with the supreme head of the Church. Surrounded with imposing splendour and wealth, and powerful as rivals to the State, the Prince-bishops were wholly dependent on the Pope, and styled themselves by the grace of God and of the Apostolic chair. In place of being pastors and teachers, they were temporal lords and monarchs, nay in case of necessity, even soldiers. It was no uncommon thing to see them in complete armour, with a sword at their side, and a lance in their hand, marching forth to battle. With few exceptions they purchased their dignities, and compensated themselves for the cost by a similar traffic with the subordinate offices. Simony was almost universal, from the Pope to the humblest ecclesiastic. It is notorious what immense sums found their way to Rome in the shape of expectancies and annates. The charge for the Archiepiscopal *pallium* of Mayence was reckoned 30,000 florins, and for the Bishoprick of Treves, 20,000. It was the same with other high offices. Even the humblest appointments, however, still produced something. "No competition," says a serious minded Bishop, at the commencement of the 15th century,[2] "for any situation however low, or by any candidate however poor,

[1] Comp. his 15th letter to his father and Heimburg's Appellatio in *Goldast's* Monarch. T. ii. p. 1593. lin. 55, 62.

[2] Mathew of *Cracow*, Bishop of Worms, in his Tractatus de squaloribus Romanae Curiae in *Walch* Monim. med. æv. vol. ii. fasc. 1. p. 1. sqq. cap. 7.

meets with success at Rome, unless a ducat be first paid, and paid to the last penny. In applications for the reversion of benefices —for these are almost all disposed of before they are vacated,—so much as 30, 40, and 50 ducats, is sometimes given. For a place already vacant, the applicant is bound to pay the amount of the yearly revenue [the so-called annate]. If, however, a provision be asked for a third anonymous applicant, never is that granted, until a definite sum has been agreed upon, and security taken in legal form for its payment." These simoniacal practices could not but corrupt the whole clerical body. The inevitable consequence was, that men of nobler sentiments withdrew from the spiritual office, and the most unworthy characters, if only possessed of money and impudence, pushed themselves then into all situations. "This method of appointing to offices," says the Bishop whom we have just mentioned,[1] "is a chief impediment to the promotion of able and honourable men, for these are restrained by good sense and shame from coming forward, and stooping to the usual means. Whereas, on the other hand, it is an easy way for light-minded persons and vagabonds, who are ready for everything, and demean themselves to the lowest services, to obtain high situations. Can anything be more lamentable? Scarcely will you find a groom,[2] or any mean and unworthy fellow, who does not hold one or more spiritual offices, no matter however incompatible, and arduous, and to which only persons of eminence and learning ought to have been preferred. Added to this, was the celibacy of clergy now firmly established, a most effectual expedient, no doubt, for making the whole clerical body an independent and powerful instrument in the hands of the hierarchy, but at the same time, an inexhaustible source of barbarism and profligacy. The obverse side of celibacy, was concubinage, and in general the licentious lives of the clergy, against which all the Ecclesiastical laws, in no century more numerous than the fifteenth, proved totally ineffectual. "Concubinage," says the same voucher from the commencement of this century,[3] "is publicly and formally practised by the clergy, and their mistresses are as expensively dressed, and as

[1] In a. l. cap. 4.
[2] stabularius.
[3] Mathew of *Cracow* de squalor. Cur Romanae, cap. 2.

respectfully treated, as if their connexion were not sinful and indecent, but honourable and praiseworthy. . . . There is scarce a person, however profligate and scandalous, who is not admitted into the spiritual office. No attention is paid by those, who have the power, to the correction of such offenders. To breathe a word on the subject would seem ridiculous, for men squander so much of their time, and thoughts, and strength upon other matters, that they have none to spare for such a purpose. They are occupied day and night with vacancies, lawsuits, hunting after properties, and the ceremonies and forms of the Papal court." There can be no doubt that these irregularities were not effectually stopped from higher quarters and by Rome; but on the contrary were even sanctioned by notorious examples upon the chair of Peter. What could be expected of the clergy when men like John XXIII., Innocent VIII.,[1] and Alexander VI., rose to the highest dignity in the Church? Accordingly during the whole of this century, we hear the bitterest complaints of their rude ignorance, debauchery, immorality, and avarice. The indignation of the nobler members of the body, and of well disposed laymen, is poured out in biting sarcasm and serious reproof. Nor was it merely the fiery spirits of the opposition, such as Huss and Savonarola, but men of calm good sense, themselves occupying the highest dignities in the universities and the Church, such for example as Matthew of Cracow, the above cited Bishop of Worms, Peter d'Ailly, John Gerson, and the worthy abbot of Spanheim, John Trithemius, who exposed the deep and universal corruption of the priests and pastors of their time. In fine, let us collect and combine into one picture the traits[2] with which the last of these authors depicts the ordinary manners of clergy. "Unlettered and rude men," he says, "wholly destitute of merit, rise to the priesthood. No attention is paid to purity of life, a liberal education, or a good conscience. The Bishops, occupied with tempo-

[1] The Epigram upon the latter is well known. It ends with these words

"Hunc merito poterit dicere Roma patrem."

[2] They are scattered in the work of *Trithemius*, written in 1485, Institutio vitae sacerdotalis. Opp. pia et Spirit. ed. Rusaeus. Mayence 1605. p. 765, sq.

ral affairs, devolve the trouble of examining candidates upon persons of no experience. The study of Scripture and learning are totally neglected by the priests, who prefer occupying themselves with the training dogs and birds. Instead of buying books they beget children,[1] and instead of studying, make love to their concubines. They sit with tipplers in the taverns, are addicted to gaming and debauchery, and destitute of the slighest fear of God. They can neither speak nor write Latin, and scarcely know enough of German to explain the Gospels. Nor is it a wonder that the inferior priests are so illiterate and averse to the study of Scripture, considering that in this they have the prelates for a pattern, who are appointed to their offices, not for superiority in learning, but for superior skill in making money. Even they are seldom or never possessed of a bible, and plainly shew a hatred of science. They are blind leaders of the blind, and in place of guiding the people in the paths of righteousness, rather misguide them. Hence they need not be at all surprised that the laity despise them, when they themselves despise the commandments of Christ. I very much fear, however, that something still more dreadful awaits them ere long." This is indeed a revolting picture. No one thinks of denying that there were also better men, and of purer minds, among the clergy of this period, nay, even great and scientific theologians; but not only were these rare phenomena, they were for the most part also objects of hostility and persecution.

The place next to the clergy is claimed by the monks, already no doubt somewhat declined in importance, but still exercising an immense influence upon the people and the youth attending schools and universities. It was the spirit of chivalry and of monachism, which, as the concomitant and auxiliary of the hierarchy, ruled the mediaeval period. The one inflamed the higher ranks, and celebrated its triumphs in the Crusades. The other governed the people, and reached its consummation in the great mendicant orders. We behold a combination of the two in the orders of spiritual knighthood, which were instituted on occasion of the Crusades. In those expeditions, indeed, the spirit of chivalry, enlisted in the service of the Church, was almost entirely

[1] pro libris sibi liberos comparant, pro studio concubinas amant.

extinguished. The abortive attempts of Pius II. and other Popes and personages of exalted rank to revive it, demonstrate that the season for doing so on a larger scale, had now passed away. The spirit of monachism, however, continued to operate much longer, and shed its influence over the whole of the fifteenth century; nay, under a more refined form, has descended to recent times. It would be a mockery of history to venture to assert, that this influence was as a whole, and on a great scale, beneficial. All honour to the well-deserving Benedictines, and to the austere spirit of several other orders, as for example the Carthusian, and part of the Augustinian! The vast host of monks, however, was nothing more than the standing army of the absolute Papal power, and a mass of intellectual stupidity and moral putrefaction. They were tainted with almost the same corruptions as the clergy, aggravated in their case by greater inactivity, and the flagrant contradiction of their manners with the strictness of their rule. "Alas, what deadly monsters!" exclaims a man who belonged to the pure Carthusian order, and was himself a model of extreme monastic auterity,[1] "what monsters, hiding the rapacity of wolves beneath the fleece of sheep, are in these days found skulking in the monastic retreats of our orthodox forefathers! They shrink from no kind of sin, and it is a true proverb, that what a hardened devil would be afraid to do, a bold and profligate monk will commit without scruple.[2] They also mislead the common people into much wickedness, and into an obstinate palliation of it. For every one alleges, "Why do you blame me for doing what is done by so many monks although they are bound to a more perfect rule?" Besides the vow of chastity, however, that of poverty was also trodden under foot by the monks of that day. For all orders, and above all, the mendicants, Apostolical poverty was the great law. St Bernard had said "that a monk who possesses a penny of his own, is himself not worth a penny." The monks, however, needed considerable pecuniary

[1] Jacob von *Jüterbock* (See more of him in the sequel) in his Treatise de Negligentia Praelatorum in *Walch* Monim. med. ævi. vol. ii. fasc. 2. p. 157—202. v. cap. 3.

[2] Quod agere veretur obstinatus diabolus, intrepide agit reprobus et contumax monachus.

means to support their effeminate and luxurious manner of living, and hence we find, during the whole of this age, complaints of numbers of them possessing private property,[1] and of the extensive prevalence among them of avarice. We have a work from the middle of the 15th century which treats of the matter.[2] It shows us how general in this respect the departure from the rule had become, the sophistries urged in excuse of it,[3] and at the same time, the sentiments held on the subject by the more serious monks. The author, himself a monk, characterises such brethren as perjured idolaters, hypocrites, and contaminators of that which is holy, and approves of the language of Cardinal Cusa, the zealous and active reformer of the German monasteries, who, in a public sermon, had called such recreant monks "incarnate devils."[4] It is true that during this period we hear of many attempts to reform the monastic establishments, while in several free associations which spread far and wide, we see no less distinctly the tendency to realize, in consistency with the Apostolic pattern, but without the fetters of a vow and other restrictive rules, what had been the better spirit and object of the monastic life. These

[1] Proprietas, individual Monks who possessed private property, proprietarii.

[2] The above quoted little work of Jacob von *Jüterbock* de Negligentia Praelatorum. *Felix Hammerlein* also has written a special Tract de Religiosis proprietariis. V. Opusc. et Tractat. fol. 46 sqq.

[3] The *Proprietarii* among the Monks reasoned in this manner—"St Benedict has said, a monk ought to possess nothing which the abbot has not given him, or does not allow him to possess—therefore, whatever the abbot allows him to possess that he may possess." See Jacob von *Jüterbock* de Neglig. Praelat. c. 9.; and Anonymi Ordinis Cisterc. propositio affirmitiva in Constant. Conc. ann. 1417 oblata, quod Monachi Cisterc. possint propria possidere bona—in von der *Hardt.* T. iii., p. 120 sqq. c. 1.3.5.6. Jacob von *Jüterbock* pertinently answers the above-mentioned sophism in the following way, "This inference does not hold, because the affirmative does not necessarily result from the negative. The proposition, however, is in itself substantially wrong, for the abbot might in the same way permit theft or concubinage. It is certain, that neither the abbot nor the Pope can permit a monk to have private property, and the monk who transgresses the prohibition commits a mortal sin. . . . The Pope, as Vincentius says, may make the monk no monk, but he cannot give him a dispensation for possessing private property, so long as he continues a monk."

[4] Jacob. *Jüterb.* de Negligent. Prael. c. 27.

reformatory efforts, however, were all partial, and were commonly rendered abortive by the sloth and obstinacy of the monastic brethren; while the free associations formed on a purer model, and which, in their continual struggles with the monks, especially the mendicant orders, could barely maintain their ground, involved, no doubt, vital germs of great importance for the development of the future age, but were, for the time, of little account when compared with the regular orders. On the whole, Monachism, even in its declension, operated both restrictively and destructively upon the intelligence and morality of society, while a few better examples could not compensate for the evil done by the dominant multitude.

6. THE CHRISTIAN PEOPLE.

If, in fine, we descend from the aristocracy of the Church, through the intermediate democratic grade of Monachism, to the people, it is easy to see what must have been the effects produced upon them by a multitude of clergy and monks such as we have just described. Apart altogether from the example of rudeness and frivolity which they set, it was these in particular who cried up an unevangelical holiness by works as the perfection of religion, were always ready with the easiest means of atonement for all excesses and crimes, lulled the conscience asleep, and kept the spirit of sincere piety, which the minor religious parties and mystics laboured to excite, from reaching any height or vigour of development. At the same time, it may be said that the people, and especially the class of citizens, usually possessed more sound piety and moral feeling than their ecclesiastical leaders, who by their vices had rendered themselves objects of derision. At all periods, and in every nation, there is a mixture of good and of evil, and it is difficult to ascertain with any degree of precision the morality of particular ages. The rule is, that at one period the vices of barbarism prevail, and at another those of refinement, and only at times of singular corruption do we find the two flourishing side by side. At the period of which we treat, and looking particularly to Germany,

the amount of intelligence was slender, but there still existed a sound kernel of honesty, truthfulness, candour, and patriotic spirit, and we behold, especially among the middle classes in towns—Nuremberg is the most brilliant instance—among merchants, artists, and scholars, a mode of life which, although circumscribed in its range, not only displayed a highly cultivated ingenuity and poetic taste, but often a character singularly noble and dignified. The blemishes which appear were more frequently follies than vices. They were rather outbreaks of strength, than sins of refined selfishness and malice. Rude unbridled power manifested itself partly in an immoderate passion for independence, and partly in sensual excesses. The spirit of independence gave birth to a multitude of petty wars and feuds. The princes often rose against the Emperor. The lower ranks of the nobility took arms against the princes and cities. The citizens themselves were split into constant factions, or, in episcopal seats, embroiled with their spiritual lords. Nay, the passion for freedom was kindled even in the rural population, and, premonitory of the war of the peasantry, several times in the course of the 15th century, flamed out into rebellion. Sensuality gave rise especially to outbreaks of debauchery and lust, and, no doubt, also to the love of finery and pleasure, which began to prevail, and respecting which, we find serious men uttering the bitterest complaints down to the days of Luther. Here also the clergy led on the people, by their pernicious example. It is notorious what a pattern was exhibited to the gaze of all Europe, by the Council of Constance. Convoked for the most solemn and important purposes, under the eyes of the Emperor, the Pope, and the chief prelates of all countries, that assembly, nevertheless, found leisure and inclination to amuse themselves, not only with tournaments, but with the tricks of several hundred mountebanks and jugglers, and the blandishments of a still greater number of another class of persons least of all proper for an ecclesiastical Council. Nor was it merely the temporal lords and knights, the merchants and tradesmen congregated in the place, who gave themselves up to dissipation. On the contrary, we read of the clergy, from the highest to the lowest rank, indulging in debauchery of all sorts, dressing in the most vain and worldly manner, and treating with ridicule the exhortations to

repentance addressed to them by the austere preachers, of whom there were some also present.

The moral and religious blemishes of the age may be best learned from the writings of those by whom they were attacked. And here, as in the similar records of all other times, the matter presents a double aspect. The deep-souled and ideal-men, who see wickedness to be a positive resistance of the Divine Being, are impressed by it with burning pain and profound sorrow, and take arms against it with a noble indignation; Whereas the men predominantly wedded to reality, easy minded and conversant with actual life, treat it, on the contrary, with keen derision and coarse humour. At a still earlier period, the Italian poets, particularly Dante, and the German Minnesingers,[1] had spoken out respecting the Church, the hierarchy, and their corruptions, with boldness and gravity, but in a loftier style, calculated rather to elevate the people than to humour their taste. Now, however, this higher strain of poetry was hushed, and the stern reproofs we hear are rather from the mouths of theologians, and the prophetic men of the Church, a Huss, Savonarola, and others. On the other hand, the masters of song give forth their remarks, in the shape of jests and pleasantries, and even the preachers of morality, from the pulpit, indulge more and more in the coarse and pithy, but at the sametime often burlesque, popular style. By them wickedness is almost always treated as a folly, and scourged with rude humour. This is the tone which specially characterises the age. The fool acts an important part in literature, and in him, as its obverse, true wisdom is held up to view. The productions of poetry, and the discourses of the clergy, alike assume the jocular character, and in several countries it is the style in which we hear the ingenious and witty express their thoughts. Felix Hammerlein, Sebastian Brant, Nider, Barletta, Michael Menot, and Geiler of Kaisersberg belong to this class, and even the scoffer Erasmus, in whom the tendency reached its culminating point, attained his greatest popularity by a work called "The Praise of Folly." If we direct our attention to one, who was a principal

[1] We have a beautiful collection of passages on this subject in *Uhland's* Walther von der Vogelweide. Stuttg. 1822. s. 114. ff.

representative of the sarcastic school, and flourished at the close of the fifteenth century, viz., Sebastian *Brant*,[1] no less distinguished as a scholar and lawyer, than as a patriot and man of the people, and look into his celebrated "*Ship of Fools*" (Narrenschiff), a book of no great merit as a work of art, but full of good sense and right feeling, large observation of life, and fresh humour, we shall find the richest traits for a picture of the morals of the age. Of these we shall cite a few.[2] *Brant* depicts with force and keen mockery, not only the common sins prevalent in public and private life,

[1] Sebastin *Brant* (latinized *Titio*) was born at Strasburg in 1458, and studied at Basle, where he caught incitement from Reuchlin, among his other teachers. For a while he likewise taught as a Doctor of Laws in the University of that city; but spent the greatest part of his life,—from 1498, till his death in the year before the Diet at Worms, 1520,—in his native city, Strasburg, no less renowned than Nurenberg, for refinement and civic polity. Here, as Chancellor or Syndic, he acquired and maintained a reputation for singular experience in life, and sound knowledge of Law. His advice was often asked by parties at a distance. The Emperor Maximilian, who highly esteemed, and was esteemed by him, nominated him Imperial councillor and Count Palatine. His learned works are now mere literary curiosities, but he has won for himself an enduring celebrity as a popular author by his *Ship of Fools (Narrenschiff)*, which was received with rapturous applause by contemporaries, and so highly esteemed as a treasury of sound observation, and practical wisdom, that the famous Strasburg preacher *Geiler* of *Kaisersberg* († 1510) made it the ground of a series of sermons. Of Sebastain Brant it may be said in general, that, in politics, he was a patriotic German, zealously concerned for the true greatness of his country, and in a religious point of view, a sincerely pious man, strictly moral, attached to the Church, and orthodox in his views, reverencing Scripture as a Divine revelation, and the Church's doctrines and ordinances as holy institutes, and decidedly rejecting whatever was heretical; but who, at the same time, had an open eye and a very free tongue for the blemishes both of social and ecclesiastic life, and for the corruptions in all ranks, especially the clerical and monastic. His *Ship of Fools*, no doubt, depicts the state of things at the end of the fifteenth century; but it is not necessary to discriminate the times so strictly from each other as to hesitate applying it to a somewhat earlier period. On the life of Brant see Professor Strobel in the introduction to his new edition of the *Narrenschiff*. Bibliothek der Deutschen National-Litteratur. B. 17. Quedlinb. und Leipz. 1839.

[2] I use the Latin edition of the *Narrenschiff*, corrected by the author, but published by Jacob *Locher* (cognomento Philomusus, Suevus), Stultifera navis Narragonicæ profectionis per Seb. Brant, Latine per Jac. Locher. Ann. 1497. The traits here given are collected from the whole of the little work. Quotatations would accumulate to too great a number.

and in the conduct of individuals, such as excesses of lasciviousness and gluttony, laxity of morals, the bad education of children, the faithlessness of friends, marrying for money, envy, loquacity, and such like, but he enters still more narrowly into the individual characteristics of the age. Fired with pious indignation, he speaks of the desecration of the festivals and the public worship on the Sabbath, describes how the knights and gentlemen usually come to church, with their hounds and falcons, and for the purpose of staring at their neighbours' wives and daughters, how the citizens and merchants talk of their business, and how even priests and canons entertain themselves with conversation about war and other news, or utter indecent jokes. Christians generally are censured for their mere nominal christianity, for the absence of any evidence of true faith in their lives, for want of respect for Scripture, for the wrong state of mind which prays for only temporal blessings, and for weakly trusting in the goodness, without any serious thoughts of the penal justice, of God. With reference to the clerical order, he deplores as a gross abuse, that every peasant is now eager to make his son a clergyman, not in order to his serving God, but merely leading a comfortable life, and that most ecclesiastics strive only for a number of benefices, while they were as little able to discharge the duties connected with them, as an ass was to bear an overburden of sacks. He reproaches the monks with their mendicancy and fraudulent arts, and side by side with them, as Felix Hammerlein[1] had done before, he paints, in the very darkest colours, the Lollards, Beghards, and Beguines, as an indolent, useless, and hypocritical set, who, under the cloak of liberal notions, indulged the most shameful lusts.[2] Even the state of the universities does not escape his keen observation. And here especially he

[1] See Opuscula et Tractatus Felicis *Hammerlein*, cantoris quondam Thuricensis, edited by Sebastian Brant, Basil 1597, in mult. loc. esp. fol. 1 sqq., fol. 10 sqq., fol. 15 sqq.

[2] See the supplement to Sebastian Brant's Latin translation of the Ship of Fools, Nro. cxi: de singularitate quorundam novorum fatuorum. *Brant* thus expresses the fanciful principles of those freethinking sects:

Vos hominem ex toto praesenti in carne putatis
Perfectum, et summum tangere posse gradum;
Usque adeo, ut nunquam deinceps mortale patrare
Crimen, et ut nequeat proficere ulterius.

gives scope to his wit, and rails at the numbers of young persons who travel from one to another of the celebrated seats of learning, such as Vienna, Erfurt, Basle, Leipsic, Heidelberg, Mayence, and even as far as France, Italy, and beyond the sea, decorated with the badges of students and masters, but occupied with mere trifles, and destitute of the slightest tincture of solid and profitable learning. On the whole *Brant* finds in his age a general declension alike of the State, the Church, and the Catholic faith, and Christendom occupying a humbling and dangerous position, as regards its hereditary enemy, the Turk; to repel whom, he, in the overflow of his patriotic enthusiasm, loudly summons the noble German nation to take arms under its chivalric head, the Emperor Maximilian, whom he elsewhere highly extols. In short, the signs of the times appear to him so critical, and his cotemporaries so perverse and wicked, that he expects the world to come to a speedy termination. Among the serious theologians and opponents of the ruling powers who entertained that idea, it is singular to find a moderate, sensible, and strong-minded jurist, and to hear him expressing his firm conviction of the impending advent of Antichrist. It proves how deeply serious minds at the time were penetrated by what was certainly a just thought, that if the progress of society in Germany did not take another turn, the debasement would soon reach its utmost limit.[1]

[1] I shall only quote one passage which contains the substance of the whole; under the title, De Antichristo fol. cxvii., there is at the end:

Nam tria sunt, fixa est in quibus alma fides;
Gratia Pontificis, quae sacro funditur ore;
Quae tamen ad nihilum spreta redacta jacet;
Copia librorum: qui falso interprete marcent,
Atque bono legis expositore carent;
Sunt et doctrinae: quibus et nunc gloria nulla
Praestatur; tenebras discimus usque meras.
Copia librorum totum est jam sparsa per orbem,
Pauperis et libros bibliotheca tenet.
Nemo tamen veri sinceras diligit artes,
Dogmata nemo colit nunc nisi solus inops.
Nobilibus pudor est doctos versare libellos;
Heu laceris Pallas moeret ubique comis.
Gloria nulla datur studiosis, praemia nulla,
Incassum studii perditur usque labor.
Tempus adest, venit tempus, *quo Pseudoprophetae*
Omnia subvertent: tempora prava patent.

The false Prophets who already arose in crowded ranks and pitched

Under these circumstances, it was no wonder that a reaction ensued. For this the way was paved and a door opened by the growing consciousness in men's minds of the existing evils. The reaction, when it came, manifested itself in two phases, which, however, are closely connected with each other. The one is of a negative character, and consists in hostility directed against the main props of the Church, while the other was more positive, asserting the urgent necessity of a better state of things, and even endeavouring to introduce it. The former is the war against the Papacy, which with all its corruptions still advanced the most preposterous claims. The other is the passionate desire, which was felt for a reformation, and the zealous efforts made to set it on foot. To illustrate the subject we intend to bring forward two vigorous champions of both tendencies, one a lawyer and statesman, the other a theologian and monk.

7. THE OPPOSITION TO THE HIERARCHY. GREGORY OF HEIMBURG.

The abuses and usurpations of the *Papacy*, and the necessity of a thorough remodelling of the Court of Rome, had in those days, and especially during the period of the schism and the reforming Councils, roused many intrepid voices in almost all parts of Europe. Foremost, and as directors of this movement, stand the French theologians, many of them men occupying the highest positions in the Church and Universities, such as *Peter d' Alliaco* and *John Charlier de Gerson*. Neither, however, were champions wanting in Germany, who with great boldness of speech assailed the secularity of the hierarchy. We might here mention and characterize *Henry of Hessen*, who terminated his career as teacher of theology at Vienna in 1397, *Mathew of Cracow*, Bishop of Worms († 1410), *Jacob of Jueterbock*, a Carthusian Monk, and Professor in the University at Erfurt, who flourished

the camp of Antichrist, destroyed themselves, and plunged the people into ruin, are described by *Brant* as follows:

Qui Christi falso pectore sacra colunt,
Quique aliter sacras leges et dogmata versant,
Quam textus planus edocet atque sonat.

about the middle of the 15th century. Reserving, however, the rest of the particulars for the sequel of the narrative, we confine ourselves at present to a single man, but one fitted above all others to exemplify the thoughts and actings of the German opposition. We speak of the indefatigable *Gregory of Heimburg*, a person highly interesting for his patriotism, his independence of mind, and heroic sentiments. We can have no better representative of one peculiar aspect of the measures now on foot for the introduction of the Reformation.

And here we must take into account an element which, although of high importance, has not as yet been specially mentioned, viz., *nationality*. The Reformation is the outburst of the purer spirit of Christianity in close affiliation with the spirit of German patriotism. It is the vigorous reaction particularly of the mind of Germany against the mind of Rome; and although the religious efforts, both practical and scientific, which helped to promote it, should not be overlooked, we must nevertheless affirm, that the Reformation became a popular cause, chiefly in consequence of the appeal it made to the national sentiment of Germany. We find instances of this in Hutten, Sickingen, and other knights of their character, and, in the highest degree, in Luther himself. There can be no more brilliant specimen of it than his address to the German nobility. In Worms he does not merely found upon Scripture, but makes a powerful appeal to the national feeling. And after the diet at Augsburg, he expresses the opinion that "if such proceedings in matters of religion are continued, no man under the canopy of heaven will henceforth be afraid of us Germans."[1] The movement, a heritage from the period of the Hohenstaufen, runs through the whole of the 15th century. It was the meaning of the language which the German Commissioners used in the Councils of Constance and Basle. The assembly of the princes at Frankfort in 1438, and at several of the diets, were full of it. The grievous complaints which, about the middle of the 15th century, were presented to John, Cardinal of St Angelo,[2] the Nuncio of Nicholas V., and

[1] Luther's warning to his dear Germans in *Walch* xvi., 1975.

[2] Gravamina Nationis Germanicae adversus Curiam Romanam Joanni Cardinali S. Angeli, Nicolai V. P. R. Legato exhibita. They

the still more celebrated Hundred grievances[1] drawn up by the diet of Nuremberg in 1522, were all its offspring. Their ignominious subjection which was felt to be unworthy of a free and great nation, and the obligation to pay tribute to a foreign state, were what chiefly provoked the spirit of the Germans. "Germany," says a pamphlet of the age,[2] "was in days of yore a free country, but now it is more tributary and subject to the Italians, than it ever was in the time of the ancient Romans. It allows itself so easily to be drained and exhausted of its gold, property, and substance, that the cunning Italians take particular delight in it." Still more strongly does Martin *Meyer*, the Chancellor to Dietrich von Erbach, Archbishop of Mayence, express himself, in a letter addressed, about the year 1457, to the new Cardinal Aeneas Sylvius[3]: "A thousand ways (many of them he had just enumerated) are devised, by which the Romish chair cunningly robs us poor barbarians of our money: And thus it has come about that our nation, once so highly renowned, and which by its courage and blood set up the Roman Empire, and rose to be mistress and queen of the world, has now been reduced to a poor, servile, and tributary condition, and for many years has been grovelling in the mire, and deploring her misfortune and poverty. At last, however, our princes have awakened from their slumber, and begun to think by what means the evil may be remedied. Nay they have determined wholly to shake off the yoke, and to assert again their ancient freedom, and it will be no small loss to

are printed in *Walch* Monim. med. aev. ii. 1, p. 103—110. Of their literary character *Walch* treats in his Praef. p. xxxviii. sqq.

[1] Die 100 Beschwerden der deutschen Nation, mit Anmerk. v. G. M. Weber. Frankf. 1829.

[2] Ettlich Artikel Gottes lob und des heil. Röm. Reichs und der ganzen teutschen Nation Eere und Nutz belangend. Hagenau bei Thomas Anselm. Febr. 1521. (To be found in the Schöpflin library at Strasburg.)

[3] The letter is in Von der Hardt Acta Concil. Const. T. i. p. iv. p. 182. In reply to it Aeneas Sylvius published his well-known book de ritu, situ, moribus etc. Germaniae, which Wimpheling followed with his remarks, "I must answer," says he, "as a German for the German, and as a Heidelberger for the *Heidelberger who is never at a loss for an answer*" (Meyer was meanwhile dead). About Meyer see Elenchus Cancellariorum Moguntin. in Gudeni Sylloge dipl. p. 530.

the Papal court if the princes of the Roman Empire really execute what they now design."

The chief representative, however, of this tendency in the 15th century was *Gregory of Heimburg*, who well deserves to be entitled the Citizen-Luther before the days of Luther, and of whom therefore we propose to give a somewhat full account.

Gregory of Heimburg was descended[1] from a noble Franconian family, studied at Wurtzburg, took the degree of Doctor of Laws about the year 1430, and in 1431 made his appearance upon the great ecclesiastical arena, having been taken into the service of Aeneas Sylvius, then a member of the Council of Basle, and one of the leaders of the opposition party in the Church. From that date we find *Heimburg* concerned in all the most important transactions of Church and State, consulted by many potentates, both temporal and spiritual, and active at all the diets.[2] The greater part of his life was spent at *Nuremberg*, the city which took so important a part in cultivating the Germanic spirit of the age. He there filled the same office as Sebastian Brant afterwards did at Strasburg, that of City-syndic, and so absorbed was he by the interests, and imbued with the spirit of this beloved community, that, in his official situation, he may be regarded as the most strenuous champion and advocate of German citizenship in that day. He prosecuted, however, other still higher and more general interests. Three tendencies, different in kind, but yet auxiliary to each other, are prominently conspicuous in his life; first, lively zeal for the commencements of the study of classical literature and eloquence in Germany; secondly, active endeavours to strengthen the tottering empire, to promote its unity and independence, and exalt the class of peaceful and industrious citizens in opposition to the martial power of the princes;

[1] The character of this man may be gathered from an excellent and well-digested article of Dr *Hagen* in the periodical, Braga Heidelb. 1839. B. ii. S. 414—450.

[2] The famous scholar and poet, Conr. *Celtes*, who, though of a later age, was also a Franconian by birth and his kinsman, praises Gregory of Heimburg as a distinguished jurist. He says Ode vi. Lib. ii.:—

Sunt, qui jura ferant, et pulchris legibus urbes,
Reges, cum ducibusque gubernent.
Inter quos fueras primus *Heimburge Georgi*,
Cognato mihi sanguine junctus.

and thirdly, indefatigable war against the encroachments and usurpations of the hierarchy. The whole of these tendencies, however, are combined in the one great aim of his life, which was to restore the greatness of his country in intellectual and political power. The two first, interesting though they are, we now pass unnoticed,[1] and confine ourselves to the last, that is, the ecclesiastical warfare of *Heimburg*. And here nothing is more worthy of attention than his connexion with Aeneas Sylvius, which was commensurate with his life. The opening of the Council of Basle first brought the two distinguished men into contact. The polished, high-bred Italian, valued the German, not merely for his sound scientific attainments, and his classical and energetic eloquence,[2] but also for his sentiments and principles. They were soon, however, separated, although still occasionally belonging to the same party. *Heimburg* continued true to his early principles. By betraying these, Aeneas Sylvius rose from one step of ecclesiastical rank to another, until, in the year 1458, he seated himself upon the chair of St Peter. From that date their mutual coolness passed into decided antagonism, which was publicly evinced by speeches, writings, and acts. The two men in fact were the most prominent representatives of the opposite tendencies of the age, and as they entered into these with their whole heart, became at last also personal enemies. Aeneas Sylvius died loaded with public honours and wearing the triple crown, *Heimburg* in poverty, exile, and all but excommunication, In him, however, history recognizes a man of deep convictions, integrity, and fortitude; in the other, the mere possessor of brilliant and supple talents,[3] but destitute of character.

[1] They are further treated of in the article by Dr *Hagen*, p. 419 and 427 sq.

[2] Comp. the remarkable letter of Aeneas Sylvius to *Heimburg*, printed in *Goldast* Monarch. T. ii. p. 1632 and 33. Here the Italian writes to the German (Juris consultissimo viro) after he had been present at a disputation: Nam et Legistam et Teuthonem superabas, et Italicam redolebas oratoriamque facundiam—he sends him his love, because, while adorning his country by his morals, he strives at the same time to exalt it in science, and says: Revixit etiam eloquentia, et nostro quidem seculo apud Italos maxime floret. Spero idem in Teutonia futurum, si tu tuique similes continuare et amplecti totis conatibus oratoriam decreveritis.

[3] Hagenbach furnishes us with a beautiful and just estimate of this

Heimburg took the field against the Pope for the first time in 1446, upon occasion of the opposition raised by the German Electors to Eugene IV. Eugene had deprived of their dignities the ecclesiastical Electors of Treves and Cologne, because they appeared to countenance the Council of Basle. The rest of the Electors, however, took the part of their brethren, and despatched commissioners to Rome to threaten and remonstrate. At the head of this embassy stood *Gregory of Heimburg*. With the port and sentiments of a hero, and in a strain of bold and defiant eloquence, he delivered in the presence of the Pope a speech of unparalleled intrepidity, and as his Holiness' answer was evasive, gave the utmost freedom to his tongue, in other parts of the city, when speaking of the conclave, and generally of the Italians and their country. Even in his dress and behaviour he delighted to show the rough and reckless manners of his nation. On this occasion, however, we also became acquainted with *Heimburg* in a higher and more serious aspect of his character. He then composed one of his most remarkable controversial works, which is still extant. It bears the title, "An admonition touching the unjust usurpations of the Popes of Rome, addressed to the Emperor and all Christian kings and princes."[1] And as it is singularly illustrative of the views not merely of the author himself, but of a large number of his cotemporaries, we shall here give its substantial contents.

Although aware that "for a long time it is much more dangerous to question the power of the Pope than that of God Almighty,"[2] *Heimburg* notwithstanding ventures to give the following picture of the state of the Church. The Head of the Church, he says, wishes to humble the whole world, and subject it to himself. Everywhere he exposes benefices for sale, and offers the cup of ignominy, always so sweet to favoured ecclesiastics, and now

distinguished Pope in the Erinnerungen an Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini. Basel 1840.

[1] Admonitio de injustis usurpationibus Paparum Rom. ad Imperatorem, reges et principes Christianos, sive Confutatio Primatus Papae —printed in *Goldast* Monarchia S. Rom. Imperii tom. i. p. 557—563.

[2] Liberius fuit a multis annis de potestate Dei, quam Papae praedicare et disputare—as is said, p. 557. lin. 52.

gradually become palatable even to princes and laymen, to whom at first it was bitter. Intoxicated by the draught, they have accustomed themselves to look upon the usurpations of the Papacy in the light of a Divine appointment: and the reason is, because the Pope, appealing to the consignment of the flock of Christ to the Apostle, boasts himself to be Christ's vicegerent, and possessed of plenary power. Although knowing well enough, from the words of Christ himself, that the opposite of this is true, he yet does not blush to assert it, and as no teacher ventures to gainsay him—for some are hunting for promotion, and others are afraid of losing what they have already obtained[1]—he has actually succeeded in subjecting the whole world, curtailing the authority of the Emperor and civil magistrate, and putting all things into confusion. Emperors and kings, princes and commonwealths, either from ignorance of the matter, or prevailing love of the world,[2] have been reduced to a state of slavish dependence, and compelled to embrace, as an essential article of saving faith, the doctrine that Jesus Christ has invested the Bishop of Rome with a plenitude of power, in virtue of which he has at his disposal all that the earth contains, no one daring to ask him, Wherefore dost thou so? *yea, issues his commands even to the angels.*[3]

[1] . . . . aliis tacentibus ob spem promotionis ad beneficia, aliis ob metum perdendi jam adepta. This same point is frequently brought forward by other contemporaneous writers, *e.g.* by *Jacob v. Juterbock*, in his work, which we shall afterwards characterise, De septem ecclesiae statibus, where among other things (*Walch.* monim. med. aev. vol. ii. fasc. 2. p. 43) it is said, No one opposes the Reformation more than the Italians, and indeed, spe promotionis aut lucri, aut temporalis commodi, aut timore amissionis dignitatem—further by *Thomas de Corsellis*, in a speech delivered before the Council of Basle in Aen. Sylvius de Concil. Basil. Lib. i. p. 19. edit. Cattop. 1667.—and by *Joannes Major* Comment. in Matth. c. 18. in Gerson. Opp. t. ii. p. 1144, where he says with great naïveté, Concilium raro congregatur, nec dat dignitates ecclesiasticas, Papa dat eas: hinc homines ei blandiuntur, dicentes, quod *solus potest omnia quadrare rotunda, et rotundare quadrata*, tam in spiritualibus quam in temporalibus.

[2] . . . vel propter ignorantiam et studii et scientiarum in adsuefactione provenientem, vel propter nimiam lasciviam mundanam eos occupantem.

[3] . . . cum etiam (ut terminis utar suorum adulatorum) *ipse Papa Angelis habeat imperare.*

In the first part of his treatise, *Heimburg* then takes up the proofs from Scripture and the Fathers of the supremacy of the Pope, which he handles with great ability. The result at which he arrives is as follows. Christ did not confer upon his apostles and disciples any temporal power, but only spiritual authority to teach. He has even expressly commanded them to be subject to the temporal powers, to give to Cæsar that which is Cæsar's, and not to administer his kingdom as if it were a kingdom of this world. He refused to be made a temporal king himself, and was obedient to the civil governor of his country; and his apostles acted and taught in the same way. "With what conscience then can a priest, for the Pope is nothing else, absolve the vassals of the Empire from the oath of fidelity and allegiance, which Christ and his apostles have made obligatory upon all. Even although, according to his own oligarchical law, he might grant a dispensation, he is not entitled by the Law of God to do any thing of the kind, without falling into serious error."[1]

Heimburg looked with ridicule upon the argument so frequently used[2] by the flatterers of the conclave, and drawn from the analogical comparison of the Pope with the sun. "For," he observes, "although the moon does receive her light from the sun, she does not receive her motion, and in like manner though temporal princes may submit to be compared to the moon, in respect that they obtain from the Pope and the Church the light of doctrine, they are not on that account subjected to his domination. On the contrary, the similitude, when rightly understood, proves the very opposite, for as these two lights have been ordained, the sun to rule the day and the moon to rule the night, so do the Pope and the clergy preside over doctrine and prayer and the dispensation of Divine grace, but the Emperor over secular things. In fact it is not desirable that spiritual teachers, like the Pope and the clergy, should have temporal authority and compulsory power at their command. That faith, which is the offspring of external constraint, is worthless. Christ himself was very far from using coercive measures to convert the Jews and Gentiles.

[1] *Goldast* Monarch. t. i. p. 559. lin. 60.
[2] Ibid. p. 558. line 37.

The second part of the treatise is of great weight,[1] and contains especially the historical exposition of the subject. The primitive Church, says *Heimburg*, by sanctity of morals and doctrine, edified the Roman world, converted it to the faith, and inspired reverence for the priesthood, whereas the modern Church, instigated by unbridled ambition, exacts as a due the respect at first volunteered by the good-will of the Emperors, has converted the liberties conceded by their piety into a despotism, and has thus gradually usurped a power which owns no bounds. For 300 years, from St Peter to St Sylvester, nothing of the kind was ever heard of. The vocation of the Popes was then not secular dominion, but martyrdom. Their glory consisted not in purple raiment, snow-white horses, wealth, splendour and power, but in conformity to the saying of the Apostles: "Lord we have left all things to follow thee." From the days of St Sylvester the Church began to mingle with the world and lost her purity.[2] Thenceforward, till the reign of Otho I., the Emperor treated the Popes with great respect. They waited upon them, either personally or by ambassadors, supplicated their blessing, and recommended themselves to their intercession. Some even received coronation at their hands. This inflated the Popes with presumption, and the consequence was that the Emperors deposed several of them. It was also enacted that no one was to be elected Pope, except with the Emperor's assent. In the days of the Othos, the imperial power was strong, and kept the usurpations of the ecclesiastical within bounds. The Emperors were chosen by the princes, uninfluenced by the Pope, who took no part in the matter. After Otho III. the Popes reflected by what means they might bring the Emperors into subjection, and none appeared to them more answerable than to corrupt the Electors and embroil them with each other, that so one of the contending parties might take the Pope's side. In this manner, discord arose in the empire, and the papal power increased on every hand. Nevertheless, in Henry III.'s time, the vacant bishopries were still filled up by the emperors and princes, and the benefices by the bishops, with the princes' consent. From the days

[1] *Goldast.* Monarch. p. 560—63.

[2] Incoepit Ecclesia *mixta*—by the pretended donation of Constantine, in which *Heimburg* still believed.

of Henry IV., however, the Popes interfered more and more with the affairs of the empire, till at last, under Innocent III., they succeeded in transferring to themselves the privileges, which the Emperors had hitherto asserted as their own, so that they appointed to the bishopricks and abbeys, and at last even to the benefices, to say nothing of all the pecuniary exactions connected with the matter. In this manner the Popes have, no doubt, become the vicars of Christ, but in glaring contradiction to the command of him whose place they pretend to fill.[1] It was to remedy these abuses that the Sacred Council assembled at Basle. The object of that Council was to oblige him who was Christ's vicar to conform to Christ's manner of life. In this, however, it was hindered. By pointing reformation at the Papal court, it raised a mighty storm against itself. The ship of St Peter reeled. Many, who at first showed the greatest zeal,[2] were won over by the Pope, and now ascribed to him the supremacy, which they once asserted for the General Council. The harlot intoxicated her lovers and worshippers, so that the true bride of Christ, with her representative Council, has scarcely one faithful admirer among a thousand. In this manner, by a single headstrong individual,[3] the Reformation is obstructed and the Church disturbed; and of all parties none is more to be pitied than the German nation, who might otherwise have regained their dear and blood-bought privileges, both civil and ecclesiastical. "Up then," concludes *Heimburg*,[4] "awaken from your stupor. Shake off the dust. Break the yoke from your neck. Recede from your shameful position of neutrality.[5] Convoke the Council

[1] The contradiction is sharply stated in the single passage, p. 265. lin. 24., where among other things it is said: Christus regnum mundanum exclusit: Vicarius illud ambit. Christus regnum fugit: Vicarius ingerit, ut habeat negatum. Christus se negavit constitutum secularem judicem: Vicarius praesumit judicare Caesarem. . . Christus discordes Judaeos et gentes in unum regnum congregat: Vicarius Germanos olim concordes saepe seditionibus conturbavit.

[2] Here, as in other passages, *Heimburg* has especially in his eye Aeneas Sylvius and Nicolaus of Cusa.

[3] . . . propter unum captiosum hominem, tamdiu reformationi Ecclesiae Romanae se opponentem.

[4] P. 562. lin. 62 sqq.

[5] . postponendo *damnabilem neutralitatem*. The German

afresh, which, with the bark of Peter, is now floundering in the waves; and by means of it reform the Church."

Such was the appeal which *Heimburg* uttered in the ears of the princes and nobility of all Christendom, with an intrepidity and vigour like Luther's, the man of the people in a subsequent age, but at the same time with judgment, and upon a sound basis of historical information worthy, in that unfavourable age, of double respect. We find the same spirit in all that proceeded from his pen. In 1459, Pius II., his former friend and patron, who had the year before ascended the papal throne, convoked a meeting of princes at Mantua, in order to set on foot a new crusade. *Heimburg*, who was present, as counsellor of the princes, saw nothing in the proposal but a scheme of the Pope to magnify his power and extort money.[1] He spoke and endeavoured to persuade the princes and ambassadors to vote against it. The enterprise proved abortive. Ere long, however, Pius II. found an opportunity of revenging himself upon his opponent. This occurred in his dispute with the Archduke Sigismond of Austria, to whom *Heimburg* was councillor. The Pope had appointed the celebrated Nicolaus of Cusa, a man of great intellectual powers, but, like his Papal patron, an apostate from the liberal principles of his youth, to the Bishopric of Brescia, in opposition to the will of the Archduke. In virtue of his office, Nicolaus, already disposed for variance, claimed several properties and regalia, which Sigismond was exceedingly averse to resign. The dispute went so far that the Duke took the bishop prisoner, a step which the Pope retaliated on the 1st June, 1460, by laying the Duke under an interdict, and endeavouring to stir up all his neighbours against him. Sigismond, on the 13th of August, appealed to a General Council, following the advice of

Electors, in order to mediate between the Synod of Basle and Pope Eugene IV., had to declare the *German Church neutral*, in the year 1438.

[1] In his Appellatio in *Goldast* Monarch. t. ii. p. 159. lin. 52. *Heimburg* says: Cur hoc? Nisi quia voluit Papa ipse abuti potestate sua, talliam imponendo, et sub velamento militaris expeditionis in Turcam instaurandae facultates Germaniae illius, quae est inter Coloniam Agrippinam et Austriam, ac rursus inter Daciam et Alpes medullitus exhaurire. It would appear he had spoken almost in this strain even in Mantua.

Heimburg, and receiving his assistance in preparing the necessary document.[1] Pius II. looked upon the proceeding as criminal rebellion, and all the more, because at the recent diet of Mantua he had forbidden such appeals. For this reason, the excommunication was also levelled against *Heimburg*.[2] The city of Nuremberg was formally required to expel the impious man, confiscate his goods, and deliver him up as a son of the devil to all sorts of persecution. Of course, *Heimburg* replied by a stout appeal, in his own name, to a future Council. This document, which is still extant,[3] states particularly the principles involved in the relation of the Popes to the General Councils of the Church. *Heimburg* conducts his personal defence with great ability and power, and bitterly complains that, contrary to all Divine and human law, he had been condemned unheard, and that the Pope had acted towards him in a mere arbitrary manner. At the same time, he developes the following general proposition. It was not to Peter alone, but to the whole Apostles in common, that Christ committed the keys. The Apostles are then, in their turn, supposed to have acknowledged Peter as their chief, and raised him to the chair of Antioch. They did not thereby, however, renounce any portion of their own commission and authority; and consequently the government of the Church still was, and continued to be, in the hands of the majority of the Apostles. The place of the Apostles is now occupied by General Councils, which are the citadel of the Christian faith, intended for the instruction and improvement of the Popes. It is vain for the Pope to affirm, that a future Council cannot possibly be superior to the vicar of Christ. Because, if all the Apostles were commissioned by Christ, if to all of them he said, "Go ye into all the world; whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven," and if they afterwards met, so to speak, in council, and sent forth Peter to reap the Lord's harvest, who can doubt that the sacred Councils, as successors of the whole body of the Apostles, have also taken the place of Christ?[4] No doubt, the Pope

[1] According to the Papal letter to be soon quoted, *Heimburg* had pasted up the original of the Appellatio in the church at Florence.

[2] The letter of excommunication is in *Goldast Monarch.* t. ii. p. 1591.

[3] In *Goldast* t. ii. p. 1592—1595.

[4] In al. loc. p. 1592 and 93.

is as much afraid of a Council, that stronghold of Christian freedom, as he is of the plague,[1] and before it meets, endeavours to oppose to it a worthless decree. This, however, will only help to call it together. For the more he shows himself afraid of it, the more he will stimulate the desire for its convocation. The objection that no Council was then sitting,[2] *Heimburg* obviates by saying, I maintain that, as an appeal can be made to the Papal chair when unoccupied, so may also an appeal be made to a General Council before it has met. *The power of the Church is immortal*, like the Church itself, which, although it be dispersed for a season, may yet afterwards be gathered together. That this at the present moment is of urgent necessity, no one acquainted with the miserable state of the Church doubts. And if the Pope does not deny that he is a part of the Church, he must necessarily admit his subordination to it, for the world is surely larger than the city of Rome.[3] His only object, however, is to rule us as slaves, and his only ground of complaint that we will not submit to be ruled peaceably.

This appeal of *Heimburg* was answered[4] by the Apostolic Referendary, *Theodore Laelius*, Bishop of Feltre, who stoutly maintains the absolute monarchy of the Pope. In his reply, he starts with the idea of order in the Church, and shows that this necessarily infers that there are regular gradations in the Ecclesiastical body, and a head at the top. At the same time he endeavours to found the primacy upon passages of Scripture and the early Fathers. It was not the Apostles, he says, who placed Peter at their head, but Jesus Christ by subordinating the rest to him. It is true that the power of the keys was given to all the Apostles, but at the same time it was given to Peter before all and for all, so that in him the unity and government of the Church are represented. Laelius traces the denial of the primacy of Peter to the influ-

[1] Sicut iliacam passionem.

[2] Ibid. p. 1593 at the foot and p. 1594.

[3] Siquidem orbis major est urbe, *i.e.*, the whole Christian world is larger than the single city Rome. This is what other writers on the same side more abstractly express by saying the Church as the whole is above the Pope, who is only a part of the Church.

[4] Replica Theod. *Laelii* Episc. Feltr. pro Pio Papa II. et sede Romana —in *Goldast* t. ii. p. 1595 -1604.

ence of Eastern or Bohemian poison, and considers it as a most damnable error, a sin not on any account to be pardoned.[1]

Heimburg did not fail once more to defend his convictions. This he did in an apology,[2] which enters minutely into all the arguments of Laelius. To shew the character of the work, we cite a single passage in which he expresses himself on the much disputed relationship of Peter to the rest of the Apostles. "You seek," says he to Laelius,[3] "to lower the other eleven Apostles in order to accumulate all ecclesiastical power upon the head of Peter, and will not confess that the whole collective body of them are superior to the one, of whom, however, we are informed that he obeyed the whole body. You deny that the sacred General Councils are the main pillars of the Christian faith, and that they have been established by Christ over all believers, even when these glitter with the Papal dignity. What disease of the mind has smitten you with such stupidity, as that you have fallen from the evangelical truths I asserted, into such errors as these? Can truth ever contradict itself? Tell me then, you who assign the pastoral office to Peter alone, for what purpose was it that John, the favourite disciple, was taught the holy truths, and imbibed them directly from the breast of the Saviour? Was it to lock them up in his bosom, or to preach them abroad? Did not the twelve in the midst of the multitude who believed, aver, "It is not reason that *we* should leave the word of God." To preach, however, is to do the shepherd's part, for it is to feed the flock with the food of the Divine word. And how could that chosen vessel, the ambassador of Christ, say of himself, "Not of men, neither by men, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father," if it had been from Peter that he received his commission. In the same way all the other Apostles without distinction of place, or choice of person, were sent by Christ into all the world to found and to govern his Church.[4]

Heimburg defends the same principles in a violent invective,

[1] In al. loc. p. 1604. lin. 25. sq.

[2] Apologia contra detractiones et blasphemias Theod. *Laelii* in *Goldast* t. ii. p. 1604—1625.

[3] In al. loc. p. 1616 top.

[4] In al. loc. p. 1619 bottom.

which he wrote in the year 1461 on the dispute between Duke Sigismond and *Nicolaus of Cusa*.[1] In this he upbraids that prelate, as he had done Pius II., with deserting his principles,[2] rebukes his sophistries, and very cogently calls his attention to the fact, that his own rank as Cardinal was based upon the authority of the Council of Constance. This argument was much pleaded by the advocates of the authority of Councils against all the successors of Martin V., the Pope elected at Constance, and it placed them in the awkward dilemma of either renouncing the validity of their own succession, or acknowledging the principles of the Council on which it was based. Here too let one very graphic citation suffice:[3] "And now you sacrilegious and shameless man," says *Heimburg*, addressing the worshipful Cardinal, "you deny that the Council is above the Pope, though you once maintained the very reverse. Writings by you and the Pope, in defence of sentiments the opposite of what you now hold, are still extant. You say one thing standing, and another sitting. But there is no absurdity for which a man will ever blush who ventures to argue, 'The Council of Constance called Pope John *their lord*, which it would not have done, if he had been subject to it.' How stupid you are to think of drawing arguments from a form of courtesy. You might with equal truth infer, that you yourself have dominion over the conclave, for when they address you, they also say, My Lord of St Peter's.[4] . . . In point of fact the great synod of Constance surrendered nothing when it designated Pope

[1] Invectiva in Rever. Patrem, Dom. Nicolaum de Cusa—in *Goldast* t. ii. p. 1626—1631. The commencement is equally pointed, *Cancer* Cusane Nicolae, qui te Cardinalem Brixiensem vocas. The family name of the Cardinal was Crebs. It is also an allusion to his backsliding course.

[2] Nicolaus of Cusa, like Aeneas Sylvius, was at an earlier period the friend of *Heimburg*. In the year 1457, as newly-elected Cardinal, he had invited him along with some others to Rome, using the following language: Veni igitur, obsecro veni. Neque enim tua virtus est, quae inter nives et umbrosas clausa valles languescere debeat. Scio complures esse, qui te videre, audire et sequi cupiunt, inter quos me semper auditorem discipulumque obsequentem invenies. *Goldast* t. ii. p. 1632. lin. 37.

[3] In *Goldast* t. ii. p. 1627 bottom.

[4] The title of Nicolaus as Cardinal was, *S. Petri ad vincula* S. Rom. Ecclesiae Presbyter Cardinalis.

John 'the most holy Lord;' and the proof of this is, that it afterwards rightfully deposed him, and if this had not been done, Martin would never have occupied the vacant chair, nor have bequeathed it to Eugenius, nor Eugenius to Nicolaus, nor would Nicolaus have nominated you to be a Cardinal. . . . The same relation as that between the Pope and the Council subsists in other departments. The archbishop is chosen by the suffragan-bishops, and by them called Lord; and yet he is subject to the jurisdiction of the provincial synods which he convokes. The parliament judges the kings of the French, and the Count Palatine of the Rhine, the Roman Emperor, and yet deferentially they gave them the name of lords."

Though already excommunicated, *Gregory of Heimburg* found himself entangled in a new dispute between 1461 and 1463. *Diether of Isenburg*, elected Archbishop of Mayence, had quarrelled with the Pope, and the Pope on his part refused to sanction Diether's election. Here too the indefatigable opponent of the Papacy was called in as an auxiliary. Although rejected by the Papal nuncios, *Heimburg* was yet admitted by Diether into his council, and for a considerable time conducted his dispute simultaneously with Sigismond's. At last, however, he found himself sadly deserted. Diether resigned the Archbishopric and submitted, and Sigismond, by the mediation of the Emperor, was reconciled to the Pope. But in these arrangements, the interests of *Heimburg* were overlooked. Even the good inhabitants of Nuremberg did not espouse his cause. Forsaken on every side, he entered Bohemia, and on the soil of the Hussites, and under the protection of *George Podiebrad*, carried on the warfare with unflinching fortitude. Podiebrad, for whom he composed a series of controversial works,[1] died in the year 1471. *Heimburg* then went into Saxony, and there found a protector in Duke Albert, who effected his reconciliation with Sixtus IV. He had just been absolved from the sentence of excommunication at Easter in 1472, when in the course of the ensuing month of August, he terminated his life of many conflicts. Such was the end of a man, who, though he may

[1] They are in Eschenlör's Geschicte v. Breslau, herausgegeben v. Kumisch. Breslau 1827. B. 1 and 2.

occasionally have overstepped the bounds of moderation,[1] always acted from sincere conviction, and contended for the highest interests—who could say of himself, that he never swerved from the independence of a Diogenes or a Cato, nor earned in the cause of liberty as large a share of temporal blessings as was his due[2]—and of whom we may well say, that although, like Nicolaus of Cusa, and Aeneas Sylvius, he might have improved his fortunes, and secured a share of their pomps and honours, by deserting to the party in power,[3] he yet continued to the last true to his conscience, and in a hard and straitened position, freely and intrepidly uttered truths of which thousands were equally convinced, but wanted the courage to speak them out.[4]

8. THE HOPE OF REFORMATION. JACOB OF JÜTERBOCK.

Having thus, from the writings of one who represented the scholars and citizens of Germany, made ourselves acquainted with the sentiments entertained in these circles on the subject of the Papacy—and that similar sentiments were very general among other classes will appear from many proofs in the sequel—it is not less remarkable to see, what the prevailing opinions were respecting the *need of ecclesiastical reformation,* and the means by which that might be effected. And here we come in contact with a man of quite a different stamp, with one who did not, like *Heimburg,* apply a strong hand to public affairs and fight

[1] *e.g.* as ambassador of the Electors at Rome.

[2] *Heimburg's* Appellatio in *Goldast* t. ii. p. 1593. lin. 60 and p. 1594. lin 33.

[3] The above citation may be seen in the letter of the Cardinal of Cusa, in the year 1457, in which he enticingly endeavours to impress upon *Heimburg,* how generally his arrival was desired at Rome, with which an acquiescence in the Romish principles would naturally be conjoined.

[4] Conrad *Celtes,* the relation of *Heimburg,* composed for him the following epitaph, (Epigram. 89. Lib. iv.)

Hic jaceo *Heimburgus,* patriae qui primus in oras
Invexi leges, Caesareosque libros.
Romanae praesul me condemnaverat urbis:
Consilium dixi, quod sibi majus erat.

his way through the world, but who lived aloof from it, absorbed in contemplation, and exercising his influence in a quiet cell, and yet with such effect, that he deserves to be numbered among the first men of his age. And he is here all the more entitled to be heard, that he did not stand out of the Church's pale, or endeavour, from worldly motives, to withdraw from its enactments, but rather showed himself one of its most zealous ministers and teachers, and practised the rigours of monachism, with a devotion so entire, that Luther's saying may well be applied to him ; " If any one ever entered the kingdom of heaven by monkery, it was he."

This person, whose name well deserves to be rescued from unjust oblivion, was called *Jacob of Jüterbock.* He was a native of the same Saxon town, in which, 132 years after his birth, the coarse Tetzel, by the reckless sale of indulgences, gave the first external impulse to the Reformation, and during the later period of his life, he laboured in the same University where *John of Wesel* taught, and *Luther* received his education, viz., that of Erfurt. Born about the year 1383, *Jacob*[1] entered the Polish monastery

[1] The man of whom we here speak is mentioned among the older writers under very different names. In the manuscripts which contain his treatises, he is commonly styled Jacob *Junterburg*, also *Junterbock*, both of which are antiquated and unusual forms of the name *Jüterbock.* From the two orders to which he belonged, he is called *Jacobus Cisterciensis* or *Carthusianus ;* from the Cistercian Monastery, where he at first lived, *Jacobus de Paradiso ;* and because this monastery was situated in Poland, from which, at an after period, he returned to his native land, *Jacobus de Polonia.* He must not be confounded with a *Jacobus Guytrodius (Guytrode)*, who also bore the cognomen *Carthusianus*, but who was a Dutchman, and respecting whom, consult *Foppens* Biblioth. Belg. t. i. p. 514.—The earliest notice of our *Jacob v. Jüterbock* is given by Joh. *Trithemius*, in Catalog. illustr. viror. t. i. Opp. p. 158. and De scriptor. eccles. cap. 814. p. 191. ed. Fabr. He is also spoken of by Matth. *Flacius* in Catalog. test. verit. Lib. xix. p. 883 (who confounds him with Jac. Guytrode) ; by Joh. Alb. *Fabricius* in Biblioth. lat. vol. iv. p. 17 ; by Henric. *Wharton* and Rob. *Gerius* in Adpend. ad. Cav. hist. lit. vol. ii. p. 174 and 206 ; by *Pezius* in praefat. tom. vii. biblioth. ascet. num. 8. Casim. ; by *Oudinus* in Comment. de scriptor. eccles. t. iii. p. 2647 ; by Sim. *Starovolscius* in Centur. scriptor. Polon. p. 103 ; by Carol. *Vischius* in biblioth. Cisterc. p. 165 ; by Christoph. *Motschmannus* in Erford. literat. Pars. vi. p. 913 ; and by *Walch* in praefat. ad. monim. med. aev. vol. ii. fasc. 1. p. lxv.—lxxvii. *The writings of Jacob of Jüterbock*, which *Walch* has printed, are, De

of Paradise, which belonged to the Cistercian order, pursued his studies at Crâcow, received there the doctor's degree, and was afterwards, as abbot, raised to the government of his monastery. He also spent some time, either as visitor or regular inmate, of a monastery at Prague.[1] For forty years he continued a Cistercian, but as the rule was not sufficiently austere to satisfy his zeal, he obtained from the papal legates, who were present at the Council of Basle, permission to change into the Carthusian order. Having accordingly entered their monastery at Erfurt,[2] he rose to the dignity of prior, taught theology in the University, and died on the 30th of April 1465, in the 80th year of his age. The learned Trithemius depicts him[3] as a man full of zeal and well versed in Holy Scripture, of large experience in Canon-law, possessed of a clear and discriminating intellect, affable in speech, modest in manners, celebrated both as an author and speaker, and held in so high estimation, that all he said and wrote was reverenced like the Delphic oracles. Flacius[4] assigns to him his due place among the witnesses of evangelical truth prior to the Reformation. His writings evince acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, and a deep reverence for them. A certain tincture of mysticism in his interpretation we must equitably excuse, in consideration of the age. That he possessed a thorough acquaintance with the state and circumstances of the Church, especially of the clerical and monastic orders, cannot be denied. His statements receive full corroboration from the testi-

septem ecclesiae statibus—De negligentia Praelatorum—and De Indulgentiis. Those which he adduces as printed, are Sermones notabiles et formales de tempore et de sanctis—Libelli tres de arte curandi vitia, added to the Edition of the works of Joh. *Wessel*, by Lydius Amsterd. 1617—Liber de veritate dicenda—Tractatus de caussis multarum Passionum, printed in Pezii biblioth. asc. t. vii. p. 389.—and De apparitionibus animarum separatarum ex corporibus liber, which work bears the name of a Jacobus de Clusa, but is ascribed by Oudinus and Motschmann to our Jacob of Jüterbock.

[1] De Indulgent. cap. 2., De quorum numero, says he, ego olim fui, *cum in solenni monasterio aulae regiae degebam prope civitatem Pragensem*, ubi abundantissimae indulgentiae in reliquiarum ostensione conferebantur.

[2] *Trithemius* styles him Vicarius domus montis sancti salvatoris prope Erfordiam De Scriptor. eccles. cap. 814. p. 191. ed. Fabr.

[3] Catalog. illustr. viror. in Trith. Opp. t. i. p. 158.

[4] Catalog. Test. verit. Lib. xix. p. 883.

monies of cotemporaries. It is remarkable that, although so zealous a monk, he avows the opinion, that monastic property might lawfully be applied by the magistrate to other benevolent objects,[1] even though of a secular nature. With deep and almost despairing aspiration, he anticipated a better condition of the Church, and forcibly describes the necessity and conditions of its reformation. Among his many works, with the contents of part of which we shall have an opportunity in the sequel of becoming acquainted, one of the most important is a disquisition "Upon the seven states of the Church,"[2] written about the year 1440, and of which, as exhibiting his reformatory views, we shall state the subject matter.

Jacob of Jüterbock, applying the opening of the seals in the Apocalypse to the successive stages in the development of the Church, believes that it has now reached its fourth and fifth periods, of which the former appears to him the period of prevailing hypocrisy, and the latter that in which many would require to shed their blood for a testimony to the word of God. These two, he thinks, are now commingled, and form the present time. In it the peculiarities and evils of earlier times are in some measure to be found. Its leading feature, however, is hypocrisy. Whether a *reformation* will take place at present, or whether it will always go back until the advent of Antichrist, which may be expected in the sixth stadium, is doubtful to him. The latter, however, he thinks more likely to happen, when he looks to the negligence of the clerical body and its members, to the wars and conflicts raging in all parts of the world, to the persecution of spiritually minded men, to the prevalence of simony, and to the moral corruption among princes and people, clergy and laity. The extreme necessity of a reformation is proved by the corrupt state of the whole world, but the means of accomplishing it have not yet been discovered. "General Councils," says this liberal-minded monk,[3] "have been convoked for the purpose, and these Councils have issued reformatory decrees, but they instantly roused a fierce resistance on the part both of the clergy

[1] De negligent. Praelator. cap. 30. *Walch* monim. ii. 1. p. 196.

[2] De septem ecclesiae statibus opusculum—in *Walch* Monim. med. aev. vol. ii. fasc. 2. p. 23—66.

[3] In al. loc. p. 38 sq.

and laity, so that nothing was effected. The children came to the birth, and there was not strength to bring forth. So great was the rage of the adversaries, that they not only sought to put the holy progeny, that is, the Reformation, to death, but even the mother who bore it, viz., the authority of Councils, and the right of convoking them, by means of which alone there can be any hope of accomplishing a reformation."

It is interesting to observe how *Jacob of Jüterbock* attempts to combine the results of past experience, and thereby to divine, as it were, the way in which a reformation might possibly be introduced, and how, while his insight as to what could *not* be expected was most correct, there was yet a veil before his eyes, respecting that which was ordained by heavenly wisdom, and afterwards *actually* took place. A *reformation*, he says, if it were possible,[1] would have to be effected either directly by God, in the way of inspiration, or by men. There seems to be no third way. Who doubts the competency of God, if it were his will, to enlighten the minds of priests and secular princes, so that each should reform himself and those connected with him? Hitherto, however, it has not been God's method to act without means. If, however, the Reformation is to be effected by men, the hope of it rests mainly upon those in authority,[2] both spiritual and temporal, possessing, as they alone do, the power to effect it not only by persuasion but by threats of punishment. In this case, the Reformation would be accomplished either by one or by many.[3] It will not be accomplished by one, however eminent he may be for pleasing manners, attainments in science, and outward rank, nay, perhaps, even for miraculous powers. We know of several who shone in these respects; yet the Church was not reformed in their day, but rather the schisms continued. Neither, in my opinion, will it be accomplished by any single sovereign pontiff. Because, in point of fact, a multitude of canons, decretals, and constitutions have already issued from the Popes, which uselessly blacken parchment, and have led to no reformation. Besides it is palpably evident that the Pope's own court is what most of all requires to be reformed, as the

[1] In al. loc. p. 39.
[2] spes reformandi maxime residet apud praesidentes.
[3] In al. loc. p. 41.

recent councils loudly declare. But if the Pope cannot or will not reform his own court, which he has under his wings, who can believe that he will ever be able to reform the Church, which extends so far and wide? The Church cannot be reformed till the wounds of its head are healed, and the conclave purified. The difficulty of doing this, however, has been shewn in the course of the present times, for no Christian nation has so obstinately resisted all ecclesiastical reform as the Italian; and with it others join hands, moved by hopes of preferment, gain and temporal advantage, or by the fear of losing their dignities. They tremble to hear a word said of the convocation of a General Council, knowing from experience, that these assemblies do not understand how to flatter or fawn, but correct and amend without respect of persons. The reason is, men congregate there from all parts of the world, and unseduced by love or fear, do not spare vice.[1]

Having mentioned that, in recent times, after the wound inflicted upon the Church, by the tragical fate of the Council of Basle, and of whose cure there was yet no prospect, many men of great learning had used their endeavours to undermine the authority of General Councils, and to set up in opposition to them the dogma of the Pope's absolute power and supremacy, *Jacob of Jüterbock* proceeds to say,[2] "Persons who dogmatize in this way, imagine that they are serving the Roman pontiffs, and do not consider that, on the contrary, they are obstructing their salvation. They deprive them of a thing which, above all others, is most desirable and salutary for any man, but of which the Pope stands in special need, in order to the good of the Church, and that is brotherly correction; for no one surely will be so insane as to affirm, either that the Pope cannot sin or cannot err, thereby exalting him above the common lot of mortals, and not reflecting that Peter, the first of the Popes, was reproved by Paul, a single individual and of subordinate rank. All ecclesiastical and civil history, as well as undeniable experience, shews that, owing to the mutability of his will, not yet confirmed in goodness, the Pope may err in faith and morals just as other men. To withdraw him from correction and

[1] Ibid. p. 43. [2] Ibid. p. 45.

deprive him of even the power of demitting his office, is the height of impiety. It is virtually to give him full license to sin as he likes, and consequently is putting a sword into the hands of a madman.[1] From this quarter, accordingly, all hope of reformation is cut off. It would be trusting to a fallible man,[2] who may bring the Church and himself into the ways of error. Unless some stop be put to so pernicious doctrine, the greatest evils will arise.[3] The Pope will be emboldened to sin with impunity, and to deal with all ecclesiastical matters according to his good pleasure. His subjects will have an excuse for disregarding his ordinances and enactments, for if he himself pays no attention to the Canons and the decrees of sacred Councils, his subjects will fancy themselves absolved from the necessity of obeying the Papal constitutions, and will murmur and say, "Father, learn first to keep thine own law." In fine no one, especially of the German nation, will henceforward attend a Council,[4] for if the management of the Church is to be in the hand of a single fallible man, it seems useless to assemble so many together, and so the Councils will fall a prey to inward discord, and become a mockery. And how dare they also affirm, that the Church assembled in council has no title to rebuke, far less to depose the Pope, seeing it is impossible to avoid judging that when he scandalizes the Church, and is incorrigible, he does not act as Pope, but as a delinquent who has fallen from the papal dignity? If, according to the words of Christ, he who offends one of the least of his disciples deserves the most severe punishment, how much more he who offends the whole Church! And who ought to inflict the punishment but that court of which Christ spoke when he said, "Tell it to the Church?" Moreover the fact, that the ministerial head is placed above the rest of the members, does not prove that the Pope is superior to the Church, for the Pope is himself one of the Church's members, Christ being its supreme and essential head."[5]

From all this, according to our author's conviction, it follows,[6] that the Church cannot possibly be reformed by a single fallible man; that, on the contrary, if, as a whole, it is to be

[1] Ibid p. 46, 47. [2] peccabili. [3] p. 48 sq.
[4] p. 49. [5] p. 55—57. [6] p. 57 sq.

remodelled in both head and members, this can only be effected by the Church itself assembled in Council; and that to such a Council the Pope must be subject in all things relating to faith, the extinction of schism, and general reform. In fact, he says,[1] the Church has in modern times become so corrupt and deformed that one can scarcely believe in the possibility of a general reform of it. Neither this age of ours, nor that which is to succeed it, will permit anything of the kind, and, in my opinion, the world will gradually become more and more depraved in morals, and God's inscrutable providence will permit it to do so, until the measure of its iniquities is full, and the son of perdition come. It is true that the Church in these days of ours,[2] viz., the year 1449, enjoys once more the benefit of a single and undoubted shepherd in Pope Nicolaus V. At the same time, it deplores the manner in which the laws, passed by recent Councils, are trampled upon, and laughs to see the total discrepancy of the prevailing practice. Nevertheless, every endeavour should be used, not to suffer the decree, Frequens,[3] which recommends the repetition of General Councils, to fall into oblivion; and although there be many who resist it, yet, by the grace of God, there are also excellent men in all parts of the world, who will never, in this or any future age, surrender the cause of Councils, who die in peace in the pleasing conviction of its truth, and who defend it by arguments which no human understanding, uninfected by passion, can resist, especially as God has promised his infallible aids to no single individual, as he has promised them to the whole Church; nay, did not do this even to the first Pope, who, we learn from Scripture, fell into error, both before and after the effusion of the Holy Ghost.

[1] p. 60 sq.

[2] p. 64.

[3] A famous and important decree of the Council of Constance of 9th Oct., 1417, in von der *Hardt* Hist. Conc. Const. t. iv. p. 1435, which begins with these words: *Frequens* generalium conciliorum celebratio agri Dominici praecipua cultura est, quae vepres, spinas et tribulos haeresium, errorum et schismatum exstirpat, excessus corrigit, deformata *reformat*, et viam Domini ad frugem uberrimae fertilitatis adducit—and then gives the deliverance, that from thenceforth a general Ecclesiastical Council should be regularly held in five years from the close of the present, in seven years from the close of the next, and every ten years afterwards.

All this, the pious and intelligent monk, less bold than Savonarola, wishes the reader to take as the opinion of one not gifted with the prophetic spirit.[1] He avers, however, that he will not retract what he has said, unless the Church, to whose authority he submits himself, or some other person of clearer insight, instruct him better. Accordingly, we have here a man, deeply impressed with the need of reformation, but looking upon it as something so great and difficult, that he dares not hope for it from a corrupt age, and who, although belonging to the movement which paved the way for what was coming, and in so far meriting the name of a prophetic spirit, was yet at the same time sufficiently modest not to predetermine in what way, nor under what shape, the event would come. It is highly interesting to mark how the foreboding views of such a person stand related to what afterwards really eventuated. He is of opinion that the Reformation will not come by one man, that is to say, the Pope, because he wants the will to effect it. Scarcely does he venture to expect it even from many, that is to say, from the members of a Council, because with the best intentions, they want the power to carry it through; and yet, in point of fact, the Reformation did come both by one and by many, and proved not less a single than it was a conjoint act. That one, however, was not a Pope, nor these many a Council, and the whole movement took a shape of which the quiet and recluse monk, who was conversant only with the ecclesiastical forms and appliances of his age, never dreamt. Still his eye had caught the essential features of what was impending, and his words yet remain as an important testimony how irresistibly the necessity of a reformation had forced itself upon the minds of even the most pious Churchmen, or rather of Churchmen above all.

It was under these circumstances, and at a time when the widespread corruption of the Church was recognized by many, and a reformation of it anxiously desired and hoped for, though, owing to the strength of opposing parties, with much fear and trembling, that the person whom we now intend to pourtray received his education and prosecuted his labours. We mean *John of Wesel.*

[1] aestimative dictum, s. 66.

PART FIRST.

JOHN OF WESEL

AT THE

UNIVERSITY OF ERFURT,

AND AS THE OPPONENT OF INDULGENCES.

CHAPTER FIRST.

ERFURT UNIVERSITY. WESEL'S TRAINING AND PROFESSORIAL LABOURS THERE.

John of Wesel's proper name was the family one of *Ruchrath* or *Richrath*.[1] Usually, however, he is called, after his native place, the little town of Ober-Wesel,[2] so beautifully situate upon

[1] The family name of this man is written in many different forms, *Ruchard*, *Ruchrad*, *Bucherath*, in Latin also *Burchardus*. The form given in the text is the one most in use. The reading *Richrath* derives additional probability from the circumstance, that this name is still in use in the Provinces of the Rhine.

[2] Many more ancient and modern writers give *Nieder*-Wesel in the Duchy of Cleves as the birthplace of Wesalia. We are, however, inclined to rely upon the old and authentic testimony of *Butzbach*, a monk in the Abbey of Histerbach, who thus begins his account of Wesel, a work worthy of credit in other respects: Joannes de *Wesalia superiore*, patria Renensis. . . . That Ober-Wesel must have been a much more considerable town in the middle ages than it is at the present day, appears from the extent of its old walls and the magnificent churches and towers which adorn it.

the bank of the Rhine between Mayence and Coblentz, not far from St Goar, *Joannes de Vesalia* or simply Vesalia. The date of his birth is not given ; but there can be no doubt that it falls within the first 20 years of the 15th century. Just as little have we any positive information respecting his parentage and early education. The theatre upon which he makes his first appearance in history is the University of *Erfurt*. We shall therefore be obliged at the outset to take a view of that institution, highly important at the time for the education of Germany, in order to ascertain in how far the peculiar circumstances of the place may serve to explain Wesel's turn of mind, or the status which he occupied in it as professor. In doing this we also step upon a main theatre of the reformatory movements in Germany, for Erfurt was the place from which, prior to the institution of the University of Wittemberg, all that was important in this respect originated.

The *University of Erfurt* was not, in order of time, the first in Germany. Even if Prague be left out of account, it was preceded by Vienna, Heidelberg, and Cologne. It was, however, the earliest in central Germany, in the very heart of the country, and the first which was calculated for a more general diffusion even in its northern parts of the light of scientific culture. It did not, like its predecessors, owe its institution to a temporal or to a spiritual prince, but was the work of an independent citizenship. For although the flourishing and important city of Erfurt stood under the spiritual, and partly also under the temporal jurisdiction and lordship of the Archbishops of Mayence, and although it also frequently recognized the landgraves of Thuringia, in which it was situated, as its protectors, it still vindicated for itself such a measure of civil liberty and independence as entitled it to be placed upon a level with the free cities.[1] The consequence was, that when the happy proposal was made of instituting a university in a locality with so fine and open a situation, so healthy, industrious, and economical, the council and the citizens

[1] Comp. Joann. Maurit. *Gudeni* (Doctor Juris, counsellor of the Elector of Mayence, Professor of Civil Law and magistrate in Erfurt) Historiae Erfurtensis Lib. iv. Duderstad. MDCLXXV. and Johann Heinr. von *Falkenstein* (privy-counsellor in Brandenburg-Anspach) Historie von Erffurth, in 5 Büchern abgehandelt, Erffurth 1739.

without, as it appears, any further authority, applied at once to the Pope for the necessary privileges. It so happened, however, that, at the time (1378), the schism between Urban VI. and Clement VII. was at its height, the former of whom, being elected by the Italian party of the Cardinals, vindicated his right in Rome, while the latter, who was set up in opposition by the French, resided at Avignon. The citizens of Erfurt, influenced by, we know not what, particular motives, addressed themselves to the latter, and Clement, no doubt with the hope of attaching an important city of Germany to his cause, accorded to them, without hesitation, and in the most agreeable terms, permission to erect a University.[1] The letter, written by his Holiness in answer to theirs, expresses strong expectation that the distinction he is about to confer upon the city of Erfurt will induce it "to adhere to him, and reject all letters and orders of Bartholomew of Periguano, formerly Archbishop of Bari (the rival Pope), who, in contravention of the Canon-laws, has taken possession of the apostolical chair to the perdition of himself and all his adherents." In these preliminary steps to the foundation of the University, Adolph, the reigning Archbishop of Mayence, by birth a Count of Nassau, took no part; at least, it is certain, that the Pope, from suspicion of his fidelity, did not entrust him, but the clergy of the Church of the Holy Virgin, with the chancellorship of the new seat of learning.[2] For a time indeed no use was made of the papal favour. Eleven years elapsed before the University was actually founded, and as in this interval Clement VII. lost all authority in Germany, the town of Erfurt

[1] The Papal letter, granting the concession, bears the date, which, however, can no longer be determined by documentary evidence of 1st Oct. in the first year of the pontificate of Clemens VII., *i.e.*, 1st Oct. 1378. The letter of privilege is dated xvi. Cal. Octobr. pontif. an. 1. *i.e.*, 16th Sept. 1379 (for Clement was eleeted on the 20th Sept. 1378). As it is very unlikely that only a few days after his election—the interval would be from the 20th Sept. to the 1st Oct.—Clement would execute a bull of concession in favour of a German University, there must either be some error in the dates, or some previous transaction must have taken place of which we know nothing. V. *Erhard* in a. l. p. 158, 159, and 162.

[2] *Gudenus* B. ii. c. 18, p. 122. Is solenni diplomate petitis assenserat, et cum de Adolphi fide dubitaret, eo rescusante (?), Archicancellariatum *Clero Mariano* detulerat.

applied to Urban VI. for a renewal of their privilege, which was accorded to them on the 3d of May 1389. In fine, a third papal privilege by Boniface IX., the successor of Urban, and dated 25th April, 1390, was added to the other two; the last, however, referring only to the clerical students. By the year 1392 all the preparations had been made, and in the third week after Easter the lectures were commenced, the papal privileges having been first solemnly read in the great college at St Michael's, and a banquet given by the magistrates to the Professors.[1] At first the Chancellor of the University was the Archdeacon of St Mary's. In a new bull of confirmation, however, which, on the petition of the magistrates, Boniface IX. emitted on the 5th of July 1396, it was provided that, henceforth to promote the importance of the University, the Archbishop of Mayence for the time should be its Chancellor.[2] Besides, by a bull of concession, four canonries, with prebends for salaries to the Professors of Holy Writ and of the Canon-law, were granted to the Archbishop, so that the pay of all the professors at this period amounted to 62 merks or 434 florins.[3] The first Rector was Master Louis *Mölner* (called also Müller) from Arnstadt, a bachelor of decrees. Subsequently this honorary office was, as in other universities, discharged by young gentlemen of high family who were at the time pursuing their studies, as *e.g.*, about the year 1420, by Count Albert of Gera; about 1433, by Count Diether of Isenburg, afterwards celebrated by what befell him as Archbishop of Mayence; about 1458, by Count John of Heneberg, under whom *John of Wesel*, the subject of our memoir, was vice-Rector;[4] and about the year 1507, a twelvemonth before Luther left Erfurt, by Count George of Heneberg. At Erfurt, we find no trace of the division of the whole university body into nations, which obtained at Paris and Prague, and subsequently also at Leipsig. No doubt this University was chiefly intended for Germany, or apprehensions were entertained that such a division might give rise to

[1] On this feast 37 florins were spent. *Falkenstein* p. 280.

[2] *Falkenstein* p. 281.

[3] *Falkenstein*, ibid. On the salaries of the Professors see also Falkenstein p. 292. In the year 1412, the amount of all of them 275 Thalers 14 Groschen. The highest was 59 Thalers. Mag. J. Zachariah, at that time a distinguished theologian, received 31 Thalers.

[4] *Falkenstein* p. 315.

party spirit, like that which not long after produced so violent a catastrophe at Prague. On the contrary, the division of professors and students into the four faculties of Theology, Law, Medicine, and Arts, common elsewhere, was here also adopted. The Rector was chosen by the four faculties, each of them naming three voters, with the exception of that of Philosophy, which named only two, leaving the third to be filled up by the students, who in this manner obtained a share in the election of the head of the Institution.[1] Besides these arrangements, provision was also made for the maintenance of the students, and their progress in learning, in the same way as at other universities, by founding colleges and bursaries.[2]

Its favourable site and judicious arrangements secured for the University of Erfurt the happiest success. For a time, it stood alone in the wide circuit of central and Northern Germany, and before the foundation of Wittemberg, to which Erfurt resigned her most distinguished pupil, the great Reformer, Luther, was the most efficient nurse of civilization in those countries. Shortly after its institution, the catalogue of the Erfurt University exhibits a considerable number of Masters in Theology and the Arts, who came to it from other universities.[3] At the first, it appears to have attracted many of its members from the University of Wurtzburg (founded probably in 1403), where the

[1] *Gudenus* in a. l. p. 123, where the proceedings of the election are particularly related.

[2] Respecting the different colleges and bursaries see *Gudenus* ii. 23. p. 135. ii. 28. p. 146. iii., 17. p. 200. *Falkenstein* p. 296. 301. 304. 332. *Erhard* p. 171. The following are specially mentioned. The College of Jurists (Schola Juris or Collegium Juris Marianum), instituted in 1410 by Henry of Gerbstet, a Doctor of Decretals, and Dean of St Mary's. He was a native of Anhalt, and for that cause principally attended to his fellow countrymen. The College at Porta Cœli (Collegium Porta Coeli or Amplonianum), founded in 1420 by Amplonius Rutinger de Fago, Doctor of Medicine, a native of Rheineberg, who, in 1394, had been the 2d Rector of the University, and bequeathed to the College he had so liberally endowed, a library rich in manuscripts. The so-called Collegium Magnum (Collegium magnum or majus). Of this we have no particular information, but it was probably the same in which the University was solemnly opened. The Saxon College established by Tileman Brandis, a native of Hildesheim, especially for members of his own family and his countrymen; and lastly the Georgian Bursary, of which we have no details.

[3] *Gudenus* in a. l. p. 123.

students were frequently embroiled with the inhabitants.[1] The greatest accession to its members, however, was made from Prague, for when, in the year 1409, under the rectorship of the zealous Bohemian, John Huss, the famous schism took place between the native and foreign students, who were mostly Germans, an immense multitude of the latter (the chroniclers[2] speak of them, but no doubt with exaggeration, as amounting to many thousands) migrated to Erfurt, where they were received with the utmost kindness by the magistracy, and met with encouragement of every kind, after having pledged themselves never to attempt the introduction of any statute injurious to the liberties and laws of the city. In those days, the University of Erfurt had already acquired so considerable a reputation, that it furnished the first Professor of Civil Law, Dr Conrad Thus,[3] to that of Leipsig, established in 1409, and to the Academy at Rostock, when instituted in 1419, Mr Peter Steimbeck,[4] to fill the office of Rector, and complete its inauguration. It also sent commissioners to the great Councils of Constance and Basle.

It was during the full bloom of its prosperity, that *John of Wesel* attended this University, and was settled at it as one of the professors. And in order to form a distinct conception how far the institution was calculated either to awaken or confirm in him an *anti-hierarchical* and *reformatory spirit*, we must take into view first, the general condition of the University, at its origin, and during its development, and then the persons, especially the most influential of them, who laboured there.

As respects *the general condition of the University of Erfurt*, the particulars which our object requires us to consider are as follows: The Universities of the middle ages have all funda-

[1] *Gudenus* in al. p. 122.

[2] *Falkenstein* p. 290: "At that time 40,000 students left (Prague) and arrived in companies to the number of 20,000. In consequenceof this Margrave Frederick I. founded the University of Meissen; but many came to Erfurt and were there joined by many from Wurtzburgh."

[3] *Erhard* p. 171. Of the foundation of the University v. *Schröckh* K. Gesch B. 30. s. 110 sq.

[4] *Falkenstein* p. 300. Founding of the University, *Schröckh* B. 30. s. 115. Jul. *Wiggers* Kirchengeschichte Mecklenburgs. 1840. 3. 89

mentally an ecclesiastical type, having been instituted under the sanction of the supreme ecclesiastical power, and superintended by an ecclesiastical board; and inasmuch as at most of them, the theology of the Church, the Canon-law, and a philosophy cast in a theological mould, maintained a decided preponderance over the other sciences. At the same time much depends upon the circumstance, whether at their institution severally, they were the direct or merely the indirect offspring of ecclesiastical power. It is manifest that they assume a difference of physiognomy, according as their institution and guardianship were the work of a spiritual or of a temporal prince, or of a free city. In the first case, the ecclesiastical type is strictly retained; in the second, we may expect a higher degree of freedom, and a more careful culture of those branches of knowledge not immediately connected with the Church; in the third, there is most room to hope for a free and proportionate development of both, at least in the position in which matters stood during the middle ages. In point of fact such is the actual state of the case, and as lively exemplifications of it, we may adduce the three German Universities of Cologne, Heidelberg, and Erfurt. Under immediate ecclesiastical government, *Cologne* assumed towards the new development of science in the fifteenth century an attitude either merely negative, or decidedly hostile. In that development *Heidelberg*, from the commencement, took a greater share, particularly under the patronage of the Elector Philip, who was friendly to science, and even at this early period, to the branch of the Belles Lettres. *Erfurt*, on the other hand, before Wittemberg became the cradle of the Reformation, was the fostering nurse of the tendency that led to it; and of this the first and general reason appears to have been, that its University was not placed so directly under the government of the Church, or even under that of a temporal prince, but grew up in the midst of an aspiring, and relatively most independent citizenship. We have next to consider that this University was founded at the commencement of the *Papal schism*, and that the season of its early bloom occurred partly during the schism itself, and partly in the time of the great reforming Councils. Instituted successively by two rival Popes, it could not cherish a strong attachment to either of them, and at a period when respect for

the Papacy had fallen so low, and when the University of Paris set the example of vigorous resistance to the extravagant pretensions of the hierarchy, it was not to be expected that a University, which had been reared under a fainter ecclesiastical influence, would adopt an exclusively papal character. It was likewise almost inevitable that the deputies sent by the University of Erfurt to the opposition Councils at Constance and Basle, should bring home with them some tincture of the principles which these councils asserted and maintained. Of one of them at least, by name Mathew *Doering*, we know that at Basle, he took the part of the Council in its conflict with the Pope. Nor is it unlikely that the members of the University, both professors and students, who, at the commencement of the fifteenth century, migrated in such numbers from *Prague* to *Erfurt*, helped to kindle the reforming spirit. For although the great body of the fugitives from the Bohemian capital at that time were opponents of Huss, on the subject of academical institutions, it is scarcely to be doubted, that there were among them many who had adopted the opinions of a person already so influential on ecclesiastical and theological matters.[1] In fine, as a necessary condition of the development, if not of the reformatory spirit, yet still of that of *German patriotism*, we must take into account the circumstance that the University of Erfurt, situated in the middle of Germany, was frequented chiefly, or indeed almost exclusively, by *natives*, and that there was no division of the students into nations. In this way, the main source of party spirit was stopped, and the opportunity given for a powerful development of patriotic feeling among the German youth there living unmixed and undivided. The importance of this will be understood by every one who is aware, that the great ecclesiastical revolution of the 16th

[1] John *Hagen*, an Erfurt Professor, who flourished in the middle of the fifteenth century, the contemporary of *Wesel*, left several writings which were intended to confute the doctrines of the Hussites and heretics in general, Contra errores Bohemorum.—Ad Episcopum Ratisponensem contra eosdem.—De doctrinis peregrinis cavendis.—De falsis prophetis.—De communione sub utraque specie. See *Trithem.* de script. eccles. cap. 822. p. 196 ed. Fabric. *Wesel* himself was latterly accused of holding Hussite principles. One of the significant prophetic sayings so common in that age related to the University of Erfurdt, "Erfordia Praga." *Falkenstein* p. 577.

century could only have been effected, at least in Germany, by men in whom deep Christian sentiment was intimately conjoined with that of German nationality. In point of fact, Hutten and Luther, the two persons whom we consider as the most eminent representatives of this combination of Germanism with Christianity, although in each the ingredients were differently mixed, were pupils of the University of Erfurt.

If we look to the *persons* who either as originators of the spirit of the University, or as professors and cotemporaries, might have contributed to the training of *Wesel*, it must be confessed, that Erfurt, which afterwards sent forth its great intellectual heroes, had not, at an early stage, many distinguished personages to boast of. At the close of the 14th, and in the first half of the following century, the scientific spirit of Germany was still in its childhood, and naturally required to pass through a stage of gradual growth in order to enter into that of ripeness and manhood in the 16th century. At the same time Erfurt was not, even from the first, destitute of men whose names were mentioned with honour at least in their own country; and, towards the middle of the 15th century, we find then an increasing number of persons, who in various ways contributed to the future progress of the public mind and the Church. It is natural, in such a work as ours, to look chiefly to the Theologians. Trithemius mentions a certain *John of Erfurt*, a native of Thuringia, and a member of the Franciscan order, as a man of great learning and experience in Holy Scripture, Philosophy, and Law, and as having likewise acquired celebrity by his writings. The worthy Abbot, however, states no particulars, and, from the place assigned to him, John of Erfurt would seem to have flourished before the institution of the University.[1] As the earliest Professor of Theology, in the newly erected institution, we meet with *Angelus von Dobelin* (Döbeln) a member of the Augustinian order, previously an inmate of the Monastery at Grimma, and after his call to Erfurt, distinguished both as a teacher and preacher.[2] Beside him we have to place *John Zacharia*,[3] apparently somewhat younger, but yet a cotem-

[1] Jo. *Trithemius* de scriptor. eccles. cap. 630. p. 149 ed. Fabric. Trithemius ranks John of Erfurt among the men who lived in the middle of the 14th century.

[2] *Erhard* B. i. s. 186.

[3] Ibid.

porary, a native of Erfurt, and likewise an Augustinian. He received part of his education in Italy, and was promoted in Bologna to be Doctor of Divinity. Subsequently he held considerable dignities in his own order, rose to eminence in his native city as a teacher of Theology, and was also, as a learned and active man, employed at the Papal Court in its affairs.[1] Both of these men not only acquired a literary reputation by writing—the first, a commentary upon the Sentences and a Treatise on Logic, and the second, a similar work upon the Sentences, and various exegetical disquisitions and sermons;[2] but they also won for themselves a common and special reputation, as Commissioners from the University to the Council at Constance. Here *Angelus of Dobelin* is said to have made so deep an impression upon the Pope that the latter called him, "a real angel."[3] *Zacharia*, whom Trithemius also extols for superior intellect and controversial acuteness, distinguished himself particularly as the opponent of Huss, and so victoriously combatted the odious heretic, that the Pope paid him an honour usually reserved for crowned heads, presenting him with the consecrated rose to be worn upon his cap, as a memorial of his services to the Church.[4] These two Divines of Erfurt, and especially the latter, no doubt appear wholly devoted to the interests of the dominant Church and Hierarchy. The case, however, was very different with the deputies sent by the University in 1432 to the Ecclesiastical Council at Basle. Of these, the most distinguished as a Theologian was Matthew *Doering*.[5] Born at Kyritz in the Marquisate of Brandenburg, a Franciscan Monk, and, from 1424, a Doctor of Theology, he lectured and preached at Erfurt with great applause. At the Council of Basle, however, he joined the opposition, and for that

[1] *Falkenstein* s. 292.

[2] Jo. *Trithem.* de scriptor. eccles. cap. 733. p 170. The exegetical works are upon the three first books of Moses and the Epistles of Paul.

[3] *Erhard* B. i. s. 171.

[4] *Falkenstein* s. 295 and 296. On his tombstone, which was lately to be seen in the Church of St Augustine, there was hewn a figure of Zacharia, with the Papal rose in his cap.

[5] *Erhard* s 171. His companions were, Nicol. Bayer, Doctor of Ecclesiastical Law and Pro-chancellor of the University, John Schunemann, Doctor of Medicine, Arnold Westphal, Licentiate of Law, latterly Bishop of Lübeck. Further particulars about Döring are to be found in *Erhard* s. 188. 189

reason, was elected General of his order, by the members who sided with the Council against the Pope. It is true, that ere long he resigned this dignity, and retired into the Monastery at Kyritz, where, after distinguishing himself in various ways as a theological, philosophic, and exegetical author, he departed this life. He serves, however, to exemplify, that the spirit of opposition to the Hierarchy had taken root even among the Theologians of Erfurt, and as a voucher, that having subdued a person of his great weight and influence, it exercised a power already very considerable. A representative of the same tendency, but who lived somewhat later, is John *Kannemann*, a Minorite at Erfurt, who flourished as a learned theologian and professor, about the same time (1460) as *Wesel*. As, according to the account of Trithemius,[1] he entertained wrong opinions on the subject of ecclesiastical power, he found an opponent in Theological warfare in John of *Hagen*, and became the object of ecclesiastical persecution, on the part of the Provincial of the Minorites in Saxony.

Along with these men, we mention in particular *Gottschalk Gresemunt*,[2] frequently called from his birth-place in Westphalia, Gottschalk of Meschede. In 1429, he was Master in Philosophy, ten years after Doctor in Divinity, ere long a canon in St Mary's Church, and a Theological professor. He departed this life about 1470, after having several times, subsequently to 1437, held the office of Rector. It is probable that this person was one of *Wesel's* teachers. For the period of his professorial labours coincides exactly with that which we must assign to *Wesel's* studies. Trithemius commends him[3] for acuteness of intellect,

[1] *Trithem.* de script. eccles. c. 813. p. 190. . . . . qui *de potestate ecclesiastica male sentiens*, cum a ministro Saxoniae (Provinciali Ordinis minorum per Saxoniam) quaereretur ad carcerem fuga lapsus ad observantiales confugit, et errorem cum vita deinceps emendavit. Corripuerat eum Johannes *de Hagen* (of him see the sequel), Carthusiensis vir doctissimus jampridem et ad semitas acquitatis revocavit. *Trithemius* mentions the following treatises as compositions of *Kannemann*: Defensorium sui.—De passione Domini.—Sermones varii.—Quaestiones quaedam.

[2] *Erhard* s. 189.

[3] De Script. eccles. cap. 831. p. 198 and 199. The *Works of Gresemunt*, which *Trithemius* quotes, are: Quaestiones Sententiarum Libr. iv.

familiarity with Scripture, acquaintance with profance philosophy, an exemplary life, and a sound method of theological instruction, by means of which he acquired for himself a great name among his cotemporaries. He also mentions several productions of his pen on doctrinal subjects; but takes no notice of any characteristic, by means of which he could have influenced the direction of *Wesel's* mind. In particular there is no trace of his connexion with the Reformatory tendencies, which at that time were so widely spread. With all the greater certainty, however, do we know this fact respecting another person, who then lived at Erfurt, and whom I have already pourtrayed. I allude to *Jacob of Jüterbock.* Jacob had come to reside in the Carthusian Monastery of the town, probably in the 3d, but at the latest, at the commencement of the 4th decennium of the 15th century, and here he laboured as a highly respected Theologian, by his lectures and writings, till the year 1465. We have documentary evidence that he was, more than almost any of his cotemporaries, alive to the need of a Reformation, ardently longed for it, and although quietly, and with little hope of immediate success, zealously laboured to carry it into effect. Such a man could not but exercise a general influence upon the spirit of the University, and even they, who were not his immediate auditors, beheld in him the animating and invigorating pattern of a Theologian, not more pious and heart-devoted, than he was liberal in his views, and bent on making progress.

In looking back upon these earlier Theologians of Erfurt, we discover, so far as we have any knowledge of their ecclesiastical position, the double tendency which marked the period in which they lived. On the one hand, there is zealous adherence to the Papacy and Hierarchy; on the other, there is the spirit of reform manifesting itself in an opposition to both, on the principles of the great Councils of Constance and Basle. As representative of the first tendency, we would name John *Zacharia,* and as representatives of the second, Matthew *Doering, Jacob of Jüter-*

Sermones et Collationes Lib. i. Quaestiones variae disputatae Lib. i. Et alia complura. Immediately before Gresemunt, Trithemius mentions Benedict *Stendel* from *Halle* as another Theologian of Erfurt distinguished in his time, whose Commentaries on the Pentateuch are much quoted. De script. eccles. cap. 830. p. 198.

bock, and for a time at least John *Kannemann*. These men however, although *their* mere names have survived, did not stand, or hold their opinions, alone, but were respectively surrounded by a host of others who shared them, and hence we may presume that when *Wesel* arrived at Erfurt, he found there, as was the case in many other places, a decidedly papal, and a decidedly opposition party, commingled with a multitude who cared for neither one nor other. We may likewise infer that consonantly with the progress of the age the former gradually yielded to the latter.

Such were the circumstances in which *John of Wesel* commenced his studies, probably—for it is impossible to fix the date with greater precision—about the year 1440. We infer this from the fact that in 1445 he graduated as Master of Arts, an honour the attainment of which may well have been preceded by five years of study. During this period his attention was, doubtless, devoted chiefly to Scholastic logic. It is true that Erfurt subsequently became also a cradle for polite learning. We find, for example, about 1460, a certain Peter *Luderus* officiating as public teacher of the art of Poetry.[1] Six years afterwards, Jacob *Publicius*, a native of Florence, and celebrated among his cotemporaries as an able orator and poet, also laboured at Erfurt. About 1485 it was for a while the abode of Conrad *Celtes*,[2] and the scene of study to Rudolph *Lange* and John of *Dalberg*,[3] two persons who did much for the revival of classical literature. All this, however, belongs to a later period. Even if he had still been at Erfurt at the commencement of these events, *Wesel* was too far advanced in life, and his mind already too matured to have been influenced by them. Moreover, we do not find in his writings a single trace of familiarity with ancient literature, or of predilection for the study of it. As for his *teachers*, besides

[1] Comp. *Erhard* Gesch. des Wiederaufblühens wissensch. Bildung in Deutschland, B. i. s. 302. The said *Luderus* may possibly have belonged to the same Thuringian family from which *Luther* was descended; for the latter frequently wrote his name Luderus or Luder. We have, however, no further historical proof to confirm this conjecture.

[2] *Erhard* B. 2. s. 13, and esp. s. 19 sq.

[3] *Erhard* B. i. ss. 302 303. 309. C. *Ullmann* Memoria Jo. *Dalburgii*, summi Univers. Heidelb. patroni. Heidelb. 1840. p. 5. 6.

those whose names are wholly unknown to us, I should conjecture Gottschalk *Gresemunt* to have been one. He had been Master in philosophy since 1429, Doctor of theology since 1439, and then played a principal part as philosopher and theologian at the University. At the same time it is scarcely to be doubted, that *Wesel* must have been influenced by *Jacob of Jüterbock*, who then laboured at Erfurt, for this Theologian was of much too great weight among his cotemporaries not to have laid hold upon so susceptible a mind. And whenever we behold a young man living in the immediate vicinity of an older, and adopting a congenial course, there are natural grounds to conjecture, that he must to a certain extent have been influenced by him. We cannot, therefore, go far astray in supposing that *Wesel* imbibed from *Gresemunt* the material of the sciences of Philosophy and Theology, but caught the general bent of his mind chiefly from *Jacob of Jüterbock*. It is possible that the John *Kannemann* mentioned above, may also have had some influence in biassing him to the opposition. This, however, appears less probable, when we consider that, if not coeval with him, he was even younger, and does not appear to have been of great eminence. It was about this time that *Wesel* entered the clerical profession, without, however, taking the Monastic vow.

We cannot exactly determine the date when he passed from the rank of pupil into that of professor. Probably the transition was made, in his as in other cases, gradually. At any rate it took place very shortly after his graduation as Master in Philosophy. In the work upon Indulgence, which he wrote about the Jubilee year, 1450,[1] he already speaks of himself as appointed a professor of Holy Scripture. Not long after—1456 is assigned as the date—he became Doctor of Divinity, and from that time highly distinguished himself as a Professor in the University, and as a preacher of the Gospel. His cotemporary, *Wimpheling*, calls him an ornament of Erfurt, and the most celebrated pupil of its University. *Luther* says,[2] "*John Wesalia ruled* the University of Erfurt *by his books*, and it was out of these that I studied for my master's degree." A statement from which we learn two things. First, that *Wesel's* reputation as a man of

[1] *Motschmanni* Erfordia litter. contin. p. 23.
[2] In the Work de Conciliis, *Walch* xvi. 2743.

science was so great at the University, that he left the impress of his mind and doctrine upon it, for a series of decennia after his departure, and till the commencement of the 16th century; and, secondly, that *Wesel*, as a philosopher, was attached to the *Nominal* opinions, which at that period were generally affiliated with a more liberal turn of mind. We know that Luther, in his early days, was a Nominalist,[1] and if he derived the learning which qualified him for a master's degree from the books of *Wesel*, we may conclude with certainty that *Wesel* himself had been one.

Any additional information which has come down to us from the period of *Wesel's* sojourn at Erfurt, consists of the following particulars:—About 1450, when he was now among the number of the professors, the great Jubilee was by order of Nicolaus V. celebrated over Western Christendom. Countless multitudes made the pilgrimage to Rome. In order, however, that even they, who were prevented from taking the journey, might participate in the graces of the festival, the Pope accorded special concessions, and prolonging the duration of the holy season to the year 1451, despatched the celebrated *Nicolaus of Cusa* into Germany to preach Indulgences, and to collect the gifts made by the penitent to the Pope in return, and which were cast into a chest prepared for the purpose. This prelate, who had high personal qualities to recommend him, as he travelled from place to place attended by a meagre retinue, and mounted upon a mule, was everywhere received by the princes, the clergy, and the common people, with the utmost reverence, and escorted with songs of praise, into the churches where he used to celebrate mass, or preach a sermon. In the course of his journey he visited Erfurt, and there, with the usual solemnities, was conducted by the clergy and citizens into the cathedral of Mary and Severus. He then rode to the Monastery of St Peter, and preached upon the lawn in front. On the feast of Ascension, he delivered another discourse to the people from a pulpit of stone. He did the same the following day on the Petersberg, on which occasion the throng was so great that several persons lost their lives.[2] We need not doubt that *Wesel* was one of the celebrated cardinal's

[1] Jac. *Thomasius* de doctorib. scholastic. latin. § 17.
[2] *Falkenstein* s. 313.

auditors. It is as certain, however, that neither the ostentatious display of the ecclesiastical prince, who had betrayed the liberal principles of his youth, nor the discourses he delivered, made the same impression upon him as upon the mass of the people.[1] We know from his work upon Indulgences how widely his opinions differed from the doctrines prevalent in the Church upon this subject, and it is very possible that the effect produced upon his mind by the visit of Cardinal *Cusa* to Erfurt was only to strengthen him in his own sentiments. The same scenes were repeated in 1454, when the well-known preacher of penitence, the Italian Franciscan monk, *John of Capistrano*, arrived at Erfurt, and there discoursed for two successive hours.[2] This person, born in the Abruzzi, a scholar of St Bernardine of Sienna, not destitute of theological learning, but of great and even universal celebrity as a popular orator,[3] and one of the hottest zealots for the papacy and Catholic doctrine, had already traversed all Italy, confuting the Fratricelli, the revolted members of his order, and now, by the advice of Aeneas Sylvius and the command of Nicolaus V., was employed on a similar mission in Germany and Bohemia, to convert the followers of Huss and set on foot a crusade against them. Canonized after his decease, Capistrano even during his life was reverenced by the people as a saint and worker of miracles, and upon this occasion probably received still more lively testimonies of enthusiasm for his person, than the more learned and sober-minded Nicolaus of Cusa. Even so exciting a spectacle, however, passed away without, as it appears, making any impression upon *Wesel;* for so little were his opinions changed by the bold, and in many instances successful, adversary of the heretics, that, on the contrary, he afterwards incurred the suspicion of being infected with

[1] He probably experienced the same feelings, which inspired Luther with his 55th Thesis. "The Pope can only mean, If Indulgence, which is a very trivial affair, is gone about with a bell and other pomps and ceremonies, men ought much more to honour and laud the Gospel with a hundred bells, pomps, and ceremonies."

[2] *Falkenstein* s. 315.

[3] *Trithemius* describes him as divini verbi praedicator celeberrimus, qui multos verbo et exemplo ab iniquitate convertit. De script. eccles. cap. 804. p. 187. ed. Fabric. Comp. Schröckh K. Gesch. Th. 33. s. 421. Th. 34. s. 728.

the same errors. Neither, on the other hand, did occurrences of so transitory a nature, although totally discrepant from his turn of mind, shake *Wesel's* reputation at the University; for having, in the year 1456, obtained, as we have already noticed, the degree of Doctor of Divinity, he not only, to use the expression of Luther, won for himself a ruling authority as Professor, but was also in 1458 elected Vice-rector, under Count John of Heneberg.[1] At this time, indeed, so great was the weight he had acquired, that another celebrated Theologian of Erfurt, the Carthusian *John Hagen* (Joannes de Indagine), a man connected by many ties with the Church, one of the most prolific authors of the age, and whose zeal for study was so great, that he fed his midnight lamp with the butter allotted for his bread, was induced to indite a work against him.[2] Whether this was one of the many works of Hagen enumerated by Trithemius,[3] and which one of them, cannot be ascertained, as in none do we find any trace of having been levelled against *Wesel.* Probably, however, it was a treatise on the principles of the Church, which form the subject of not a few of this author's productions: And we may perhaps venture to conjecture that the controversy related to Indulgences; for upon that subject, *Wesel* had already promulgated opinions very much at variance with the prevailing doctrine, and therefore likely to provoke contradiction. This

[1] *Falkenstein* s. 315: "In the year 1458 Count John of Henneberg was Rector Magnificentissimus, whose Vice-rector was the then famous and learned theologian M. John *Wesel*, commonly styled *Vesalia.* His *Lectiones* and *Quaestiones* on the Sententias Lombardi were afterwards held in *singular esteem* in this University."

[2] See *Falkenstein* ibid.

[3] De script. eccles. cap. 822. p. 195. *Trithemius* says of him, Johannes *Hagen*, alias *de Indagine*, natione Teutonicus, ordinis Carthusiensium, domus montis Salvatoris prope Erfordiam, Prior in Ysenach, et in Stetyn, vir in divinis Scripturis studiossisimus et valde eruditus atque in jure canonico egregie doctus, ingenio clarus, concilio promptus et providus. Scripsit aperto sermone multa praeclara volumina ad Principes, Episcopos et alios Ecclesiarum praelatos, de variis ac diversis questionibus interrogatus. *Trithemius* relates that *Hagen* published more than 300 Treatises, but that of these only a small part had come into his hands; still he quotes from 60. Among them is a pamphlet against Joh. *Kannemann*, who lived in Erfurdt contemporaneously with *Hagen* and *Wesel*, and who, as is worthy of remark, for a long time also adhered to the opposition party in the Church.

leads us to further considerations, for which we have a more definite historical basis than for the foregoing.

CHAPTER SECOND.

JOHN OF WESEL AND INDULGENCES.

The doctrine respecting Indulgence is one of the most comprehensive and remarkable in the Catholic system. It concentrates, as in a focus, all the radii of the hierarchical tendencies; while the practice in the matter, especially as carried on in the fifteenth century, exhibits in the most glaring colours the secularity of the Church. Nothing could be more natural than that it should prove the origin of the Reformatory movement of the sixteenth century. Luther and his coadjutors opposed the inward and spiritual to that which was outward and carnal, and in attempting to unravel the web of the Hierarchy and Scholasticism, were led from point to point, until, as an inevitable consequence, a war was kindled against the whole Catholic system, which could not but ultimately end in the construction and establishment of two radically different theories. In all such matters neither good nor evil comes at once, and so the doctrine of Indulgences had run its course for centuries before it reached its acme. In much the same way the opposition to it had been growing for more than a century before it rose to the outburst at the Reformation. Even in the case of Luther himself we may discriminate several stages in the progress of his mind. At first, as is well known, he attacked not Indulgences themselves, but only their abuses, and nothing but the necessity of advancing forced him at last to reject them root and branch. In the progress of this opposition, *John of Wesel* plays one of the most important parts upon the theological stage. He stands in the history of it as a salient out-post, having advanced much farther than any of his predecessors in the warfare. They had merely attacked particular defects, whereas he took a penetrating and comprehensive

view of the whole institute, and its foundations. In order, however, to understand the position which he occupied, and the nature of the controversy which he carried on, it is necessary to give a particular account both of the growth of the doctrine upon the subject, and of the commencement of the theological war against it.

Indulgence[1] is originally the remission of ecclesiastical pains and penalties, and in as far as it is connected with penitance as an ordinance of the Church, its commencements are lost to the view in the earliest ages of Christianity. The primitive Church exercised so strict a watch over the purity of its members, as to exclude from communion all who were openly guilty of sin and disobedience. If the excommunicated person desired readmission, he was obliged to submit to a penitential discipline, which was often very wearisome and severe. The penances consisted of abstinences and mortifications, voluntarily undergone, as well as good works, such as prayers and alms. After having endured a fixed and sufficient amount of these, and provided he had thereby exhibited the signs of a truly contrite mind, the penitent was received back, by certain regular steps, into fellowship with the Church. If even in the early stages of his probation, decided traces of amendment were visible, the severity of the discipline might be mitigated, or its duration abridged, and this was the first unobjectionable and harmless commencement of remission or indulgence. That which, in primitive times, was granted only to the excommunicated, came in time to be extended to all delinquents. Penitential discipline was exercised to a wider extent, but for that very reason, especially when the members of the Christian society increased among the upper and even the highest ranks, it became more indulgent and more lax. During the mediæval period, in fact, it was no longer regarded as a spiritual and moral matter at all, but rather as an ecclesiastical act, and obtained a place among the sacraments. Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas were the parties chiefly instrumental in constructing the doctrine, as of the other sacraments, so likewise of that of penance. No doubt they drew a distinction between in-

[1] On the History of Indulgences consult especially : *Amort* de origine progressu, valore et fructu indulgentiarum. Aug. Vindel. 1735.

ward and outward penitance, and asserted that the latter was only valid and efficacious when founded upon the former. But still, as there was a general bent of the age towards the external and legal, and as it was connected with other ecclesiastical ordinances, a superior value was ascribed to bodily penitance. The constituent elements of the sacrament so-called were, according to the doctrine of certain old fathers, especially Hildebert of Tours, said to be contrition of heart, confession with the mouth, and satisfaction by works. It is with the last that we are here principally concerned.

Penitance corresponds in a certain respect with baptism, for while the latter, as a purely sacramental act, commences the Christian life, and procures remission of the guilt of all antecedent sin, both original and actual, the former as being not merely a sacrament, but likewise a good work, and practised as long as we live (whether in act or in habit) procures the forgiveness of the sins which we commit in the course of our lives. Such sins being personal, require a personal satisfaction, and this is effected by the good works, which constitute the third part of penitance. These good works are, according to the measure of the trespass, fixed and imposed by the priest, acting as the steward of the sacrament, and the judge armed with the power of the keys, in the room of Christ and God. They consist chiefly of fasting, prayer, and alms, and are efficacious not merely in doing away the sins of the past, but as a preservation from those of the future. And just as in early times the penances of the excommunicated were frequently mitigated, so in the course of the middle ages, an analogous mitigation was introduced, with reference to the works of penance, to which delinquents were subjected. Permission was given to exchange a more severe for a gentler kind of penance. Sometimes, in place of doing penance himself, the party was allowed to employ a substitute. And sometimes, in fine, instead of the actual penance prescribed, some service conducive to the interest of the Church and the glory of God was accepted. This last was the real basis of Indulgence. Even here, however, the process was gradual. At first only personal acts performed for the Church were admitted. Then pecuniary gifts became more and more common, until at last the matter assumed the shape of a mere money speculation. Initiatively the abuse grew up in

practice. Then came Scholasticism, and furnished it with a theoretical substratum, and not until the institution had thus received an ecclesiastical and scientific basis, was a method of practice introduced which overstepped all limits.

The first powerful impulse to the introduction of Indulgences properly so called, was given by the Crusades at the great Synod of Clermont in 1096. Urban II. there promised to all who took part in the Crusade, which he proposed as a highly meritorious ecclesiastial work, plenary Indulgence (Indulgentias plenarias); and from that date, for a period of two hundred years, this grace of the Church continued one of the most powerful means for renewing and enlivening these expeditions; although it was evident to unprejudiced cotemporaries that the adventurers, when they crossed the ocean, did not undergo a change of character with the change of climate.[1] The same favour was ere long extended to the military expeditions set on foot against the heretics in Europe, and at last, by Boniface VIII. in 1300, to the year of the Roman jubilee. Subsequently to that date, several monastic orders and holy places likewise received from successive Popes special privileges in the matter of Indulgence.

The practice was already in full vogue, when the *Scholastic Theology* obsequiously offered to justify it in speculation. It is of special importance for a right understanding of the sequel to know how that was done, and to this end there are three men who chiefly claim our attention, *Alexander of Hales*, *Albert the Great*, and *Thomas Aquinas*. The two former, especially the first, laid the foundation. St Thomas completed the structure.

Alexander of Hales († 1245) furnished a suitable substratum to the theory of Indulgence by propounding the doctrine of the so-called *Treasure of the Church*. That doctrine rests upon the following train of thoughts: Christ, the God-man, by his infinitely meritorious sufferings and death, has not only made a sufficient, but a more than sufficient satisfaction for the sins of mankind.[2] He has acquired a superabundance of merit. This

[1] Coelum, non animum mutant, qui trans mare currunt,—says Albert of Stade in his Chronick. Helmst. Ausg. fol. 188.

[2] Even one drop of the blood of Christ would have been sufficient to expiate the guilt of mankind, but he shed infinitely more, Non guttam sanguinis modicam, quae tamen propter unionem ad Verbum

superfluous merit of Christ is conjoined with that of the martyrs and saints, which is similar in kind, though smaller in degree, for they likewise performed more than the divine law required of them. The sum of these supererogatory merits and good works forms a vast Treasure, which is disjoined from the persons who won or performed them, exists objectively, and having been accumulated by the Head and Members of the Church, and intended by them for its use, it belongs to the Church, and is necessarily placed under the administration of its representatives, especially the Pope, who is supreme. It is therefore competent for the Pope, according to the measure of his insight at the time, to draw from this Treasure, and bestow upon those, who have no merit of their own, such supplies of it as they require. "Indulgences and remissions," says this author,[1] "are made from the supererogatory merits of Christ's members, but most of all from the superabundance of Christ's own, the two constituting the Church's spiritual treasure. The administration of this treasure does not pertain to all, but to those only who occupy Christ's place, viz., the Bishops." It appears to Alexander of Hales that this transference of merit from one party to another does not infringe upon God's penal justice, inasmuch as in every case a punishment is inflicted, and a satisfaction made, and this within the precincts of the Church. "For," he says, "when the Pope grants plenary Indulgence, he inflicts a penalty, inasmuch as he obliges the Church or one of its members, to make satisfaction. Or it may also be said, The Treasure of the Church, from which the indulgence is taken, is derived substantially from Christ's merits, and consequently God still punishes evil, having as God-man suffered and satisfied for us."[2] To the objection raised by some that the absolution of the Church availed only before the Church's tribunal, and not before God's, Alexander of Hales answers by saying,[3] that if that were

pro redemptione totius humani generis suffecisset, sed copiose velut quoddam profluvium noscitur effudisse, ita ut a planta pedis usque ad verticem nulla sanitas inveniretur in ipso—is the language of Clemens VI. in his Jubilee-Bull of 27th Jan. 1343, which first gave the sanction of the Church to the theory of Indulgences elaborated by the Schoolmen.

[1] *Alexand. Hales.* Summa. P. iv. Quaest. 23. art. 2. membr. 3.

[2] Ibid. Membr. 6.

[3] Quaest. 23. art. 1.

true, Indulgences would be more a deception than a consolation, more a cruelty than a blessing, because the mitigation of the present penalty would necessarily be followed by an incomparable aggravation of the penalty afterwards inflicted by God, and that we must hold Indulgence to be also valid before the Divine tribunal, seeing that God considers as remitted what the Church remits.[1] As regards the extent of Indulgence, Alexander of Hales is of opinion that it reaches even to the souls in Purgatory,[2] under the condition, however, that there shall be the power of the keys in the party who dispenses it, faith, love, and devotion in the party to whom it is dispensed, and a competent reason and a proper relation between the two. He does not, however, suppose that in such cases Indulgence is granted in the way of judicial absolution or barter, but in that of intercession (per modum suffragii sive impetrationis).

Albert, the Great, († 1280), adopting the opinions of this predecessor, designates Indulgence[3] the remission of some imposed punishment or penance, proceeding from the power of the keys and the treasure of the superfluous merits of the perfect. A penalty can only be remitted to a party by whom it is due, on condition that some other party, who has done more than was obligatory upon him, furnishes an equivalent for it; and this *more* is kept in store in the treasure belonging to the Church, and containing the fulness of the merits of Christ and the saints. With respect to the efficacy of Indulgence, Albert proposes to steer a middle course between two extremes. Some, he says, imagine that Indulgence has no efficacy at all, and is merely a pious fraud, by which men are enticed to the performance of good works, such as pilgrimages and almsgiving. These, however, reduce the action of the Church to child's play, and fall into heresy. Others, carrying the contrary opinion farther than

[1] Instead of coming to the conclusion, that as the justice of man can never be wholly adequate to that of God, so the granting of Indulgences, which proceeds on that principle, ought not to take place, the Schoolmen rather infer as follows,—Inasmuch as, if the judgment of the Church did not coincide with that of God, Indulgence would be a cruel deception, it follows that, as the infallible Church grants Indulgence, its judgment must be in unison with that of God.

[2] Ibid. art. 2. membr. 5.

[3] *Albert. Magn.* in Sentent. Lib. iv Dist. 20. art. 16, 17.

is necessary, assert that an Indulgence at once and unconditionally accomplishes all that is expressed in it, and thus make the Divine mercy diminish the fear of judgment.[1] The true medium is, that Indulgence has that precise amount of efficacy which the Church assigns to it. In order to this, however, six conditions are required,—two on the part of Him who dispenses it, viz., competent authority and a pious cause; two on the part of the receiver, viz., repentance[2] and faith in the power of the keys; and two on the part of the Church, viz., the superabundance of the treasure of merits, and a proper appreciation of the deliverance for which Indulgence was instituted.[3]

The whole exposition both of Alexander of Hales and of Albert the Great proceeds on the radical, though unexpressed, supposition that the *Church* is properly an indivisible whole, the parts of which are all connected with each other, or a *mystical body* in which the acts of the head redound to the advantage of the members, and those of any one member to that of all the others; so that, in consequence of their mutual connexion as members one of another, the merits of each are transferable to any of the rest. Now this thought we find distinctly expressed by *Thomas Aquinas* († 1274), who is here too the Church's most authoritative representative, and embodies the substantial import of this doctrine as it had come to be taught in the Church and the schools.[4]

Thomas views Indulgence first as it is in itself, secondly with reference to the party dispensing, and thirdly with reference to the party receiving it. As for *Indulgence in itself*, he deduces its efficacy indirectly from Christ.[5] The history of the adulteress shews, that it is in Christ's power to remit the penalty of sin without satisfaction, and so could Paul, and so also can the Pope, whose power in the Church is not inferior to Paul's. Besides, the Church general is infallible, and as it sanctions and practises

[1] . . . nimis bonum forum dant de misericordia Dei.

[2] . . . et ideo semper in litteris indulgentiarum continetur: omnibus contritis et confessis.

[3] justa aestimatio solutionis ejus, pro qua indulgentia est instituta.

[4] The treatise of *Thomas* Aquinas referring to this point is in the Supplementum tertiae partis Summae Theologiae, Quaest. xxv.—xxvii.

[5] In a. 1. Quaest. xxv. art. 1.

Indulgence, Indulgence must be valid. This, *Thomas* is persuaded, all admit, *because there would be impiety* in representing any act of the *Church* as *nugatory*. Many, however, allege that it does not absolve from liability to the penalties inflicted by God in Purgatory, but merely from liability to that punishment which the priest imposes, or the ecclesiastical laws ordain. But this appears to be false. In the first place, because it would be expressly contrary to the privilege conferred upon Peter, which declares, that what he remits on earth shall be remitted in heaven; and further, because, were the Church to dispense Indulgence on the terms supposed, it would rather condemn, than acquit penitents, inasmuch as, while absolving them from the prescribed penances, it would consign them to the penalties of Purgatory, which are far more severe. It must, therefore, be held that, both before the court of the Church, and the tribunal of God, Indulgence is efficacious for the remission of the punishment remaining after contrition, confession, and absolution, whether that punishment be expressly imposed or not. *The reason of its efficacy*, however, lies in *the oneness of the mystical body*,[1] within the limits of which there are many who, as respects works of penitence, have done more than they were under obligation to do; for instance, many who have patiently endured undeserved sufferings sufficient to expiate a great amount of penalties. In fact, *so vast is the sum* of these merits that it *greatly exceeds the measure of the guilt of all the living*, especially when augmented by *the merit of Christ*, which, although operative in the sacraments, is not in its operation confined to these, but being infinite, extends far beyond them. Within the Church any one person may satisfy for another. The saints, in whom there is an overplus of works of satisfaction, did not perform them on account of this or that individual, who needed pardon, but *on account of the whole* Church; as the Apostle declares (Col. i. 24): "I fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ for his body's sake, which is the Church." And thus it is that the *merits* of which we speak are a *common good of the Church*. That, however, which is the common property of a multitude is

[1] Quaest. xxv. art. 1: Ratio autem, quare valere possint, est *unitas corporis mystici*, in qua multi in operibus poenitentiae supererogaverunt etc.

apportioned to the individuals of it, *according to the good pleasure of him who presides over the whole.*[1] Hence, as any party would obtain the remission of a penalty, were another to make satisfaction expressly in his name, the same happens when the satisfaction, made by that other, is allotted to him by a third having competent authority to do so.

On the *extent* of the efficacy of Indulgences, *St Thomas* adopts the opinions of his forerunners,[2] to the effect, that Indulgence possesses all the validity which the Church declares it has, and that it must be valid, in every case in which there is authority on the part of him who dispenses, love on the part of him who obtains it, and piety in the reason for which it is vouchsafed. On the other hand, he rejects two other views, one, that the efficacy of Indulgence is regulated by the measure of the faith and piety of the recipient; the other, that it is so by the equitable judgment of good men. And the reason why he thinks the first of these opinions unsound, is, because the Church would lose her whole authority, if anywhere in the dispensing of Indulgences there were to be pious fraud or falsehood. The second opinion he considers unsound, because, according to it, absolution would be less an act of pardon than of barter; and, moreover, because the Church could not be wholly acquitted of falsehood, as she sometimes accords a greater Indulgence than seems answerable to a sound judgment. The measure of the efficacy of Indulgence—this *St Thomas* reckons to be the truth—is determined by the measure of its cause. The procuring cause of the remission of punishment in Indulgence is, however, solely the plenitude of the Church's merits, not the piety, labours, or gifts of the party by whom it is obtained; and therefore the quantity of the Indulgence does not need to correspond with any of these, but only with the merits of the Church. The merits of the Church, however, are always superabundant, and therefore every one secures pardon in the measure in which these merits are allotted to him. All that is requisite for their application is authority on the part of the dispenser, and a reason corresponding with the

1 . . . sic praedicta merita sunt communia totius Ecclesiae. Ea autem, quae sunt alicujus multitudinis communia, distribuuntur singulis de multitudine, secundum arbitrium ejus, qui multitudini praeest.

2 Quaest. XXV. art. 2.

purpose of those by whom they were collected. They were collected, however, for the glory of God, and the good of the Church in general; and therefore every cause, which relates to the glory of God and the good of the Church, is a sufficient ground for granting Indulgence. For this reason it may be granted for any secular service performed in the interest of the Church,[1] such for example as waging war with her enemies, building churches and bridges, making pilgrimages, and bestowing charitable gifts, provided only that such secular services are pointed to a spiritual object. And this is also the reason why there can never be simony in an Indulgence. An Indulgence is the giving of a spiritual thing, not in return for a temporal thing, but in return for a spiritual thing like itself.

In respect of *the party who ought to dispense Indulgence, St Thomas* asserts[2] that no mere priest or pastor, but *only the bishop*, is competent for the duty. To grant Indulgence, he says, is something greater than to excommunicate, and as the clergyman is not authorized to do the one, just as little is he authorized to do the other. Neither is Indulgence taken from the merits of particular persons or churches, but from the treasure of *the Church general*, where they are contained in inexhaustible plenitude, and therefore no person who presides merely over one of her congregations, but he only who presides over the whole, and who is therefore called her prelate, can dispense it.[3] On the other hand, deacons and other parties, not in orders, as for example *Nuncios*, may grant Indulgence, if either in an ordinary or extraordinary way, they have been entrusted with jurisdiction for the purpose. For Indulgence does not, like sacramental acts, pertain to the power of the keys inherent in the *priesthood*, but to that power of the keys which belongs to *jurisdiction*, (ad clavem jurisdictionis non ad clavem ordinis.)[4] The efficacy of this latter power of the keys, however, does not,

[1] Quaest. xxv. art. 3. [2] Quaest. xxvi.

[3] Quaest. xxvi. art. 1.: . . . in una persona vel in una congregatione non est indeficientia meritorum, ut sibi et omnibus aliis valere possint, unde iste non absolvitur a poena debita pro toto, nisi tantum determinate pro eo fiat, quantum debeat. Sed in Ecclesia tota est indeficientia meritorum, praecipue propter meritum Christi; et ideo solus ille, qui praeficitur Ecclesiae, potest indulgentias facere.

[4] Quaest. xxv. art. 2.

like that of the sacraments, depend solely upon God, but is subject also to the judgment of men.[1] But although bishops and other parties, invested with jurisdiction, are competent to grant Indulgence, still the plenitude of ecclesiastical power resides in the *Pope*, whereas the Bishops are but the assistants he employs, and the judges who represent him in particular countries. *Only the Pope therefore possesses the power of Indulgence in plenitude.* Let a sufficient cause be presupposed, and in this matter he can act *according to his good pleasure;* whereas the Bishops can only do as much as the Pope directs, and no more.[2] As for the frame of mind of the dispensing party, an Indulgence is not rendered inefficacious, even though that party should happen to be in mortal sin,[3] for it is granted in virtue of jurisdiction which mortal sin does not annul. Besides, he who grants Indulgence does not remit the penalty in the strength of *his own* merits, but in the strength *of the* merits contained in the treasure of the Church, so that his personal character does not enter into account.

In fine, as regards *the recipients of Indulgence, St Thomas* delivers the following judgment:[4] In their case, no doubt, the efficacy of the grace is obstructed by the presence of mortal sin, for, although on that account they have all the more need, they are yet all the less susceptible, of it.[5] He who commits a mortal sin is to be regarded in the light of a dead member; and as in the natural body such a member receives no influence from the living ones, so neither does he who commits a mortal sin receive influence from the living members of the Church; and as there is no remission of penalty unless there be a previous remission of guilt, so Indulgence cannot profit those who live in the guilt of mortal sin, but those only who have repented of it and confessed it.[6] The question, whether Indulgence can benefit monks, is answered by *St Thomas* in the affirmative,[7] on the ground, that there is no reason why they should not reap advantage from the merits of others, and because there would be a

[1] . . . clavis jurisdictionis non est quid sacramentale, et effectus ejus arbitrio hominis subjacet.
[2] Quaest. xxvi. art. 3.
[3] Ibid. art. 4.
[4] Quaest. xxvii.
[5] Quaest. xxvii. art. 1.
[6] contritis et confessis.
[7] Quaest. xxvii. art. 2.

contradiction, if the Monastic vow, which is a benefit, were connected with a disadvantage. Nay, even to the person who dispenses it, Indulgence may be profitable.[1] For although he cannot appoint it for himself alone, still, if Indulgence be granted at all, he would be in worse circumstances than others, were he himself incapable of benefitting by it. On the other hand, it is self-evident, that as all Indulgence is connected with certain services, the efficacy of it ceases, if these conditions, as being its procuring cause, are not fulfilled.[2] With this, however, is connected a still more important question,[3] which *St Thomas* answers elsewhere. If all Indulgence is given on account of some corresponding cause and service, it may be matter of doubt, whether it can possibly benefit *the dead*, seeing that they are no longer capable of doing anything for the good of the Church. This doubt *St Thomas* solves by saying, "Absolutely and directly Indulgence is of no benefit to the dead; indirectly, however, and derivatively, it may turn to their advantage if adjusted for that end. Indulgence is useful in two ways, originally and derivatively. Originally, it benefits him who receives it, because he performs the service for which it is bestowed; and derivatively it benefits him *in whose behalf the service is done, which is the procuring cause of the Indulgence.* To this end, however, a special and appropriate form of Indulgence is requisite. It must, for instance, be said, "If the party perform this or that service, then shall he and his father, or any one of his near relations being in Purgatory, obtain such and such Indulgence." An Indulgence of this kind benefits not merely the living but also the dead. For *there is no reason* why the Church should be able to transfer the common good of her merits, which is the basis of Indulgence, to the living, and not also to the dead. In the case of the dead, however, *St Thomas*, following Alexander of Hales, represents the efficacy of Indulgence as resulting not from judicial acquittal (per modum absolutionis et judicii), but from deliverance and intercession (per modum solutionis et suffragii), an opinion which subsequently became prevalent in the Church, although not without contradiction—Gerson, for example, denied the efficacy

[1] Quaest. xxvii. art. 4.
[2] Quaest. lxxii. art. 10.
[2] Ibid. art. 3.

of absolution upon the dead,[1] while others fancied that there was here also an immediate judicial decision of the Pope.[2]

In this manner, the doctrine of Indulgence had been fully elaborated so early as the second half of the 13th century. What had been written upon it, especially by *St Thomas*, continued thenceforward the type of the Church's teaching, and was neither superseded nor changed by the Council of Trent. A criticism of it would be here out of place: But to some points we must advert, partly for the purpose of introducing, and partly in order to explain *the opposition against it.* Viewed even in its purest form, as stated by the most eminent doctors, and sanctioned by Papal bulls, the doctrine of Indulgence not only introduces a contradiction into the Catholic system, in respect that works of satisfaction, which were originally an integral part of the sacrament of penitence, are entirely disconnected with it, and viewed as a mere matter of ecclesiastical jurisdiction; but it has this further radical defect pervading all its constituent parts, that moral and religious things which can only be taken as spiritual magnitudes, are considered as material ones, *quality* being treated wholly as *quantity*, and consequently a standard of external computation, and a sort of religious arithmetic applied, which involves contradiction.[3] Even in order to establish the superabundance of the merit of Christ, it was affirmed that though a single drop of his blood would have sufficed for a universal atonement, yet the Saviour had shed *so much*, as if it were not the Divine sacrifice of love on the part of the Son of

[1] *Gerson* Sermo ii. pro defunctis. His Treatise de Indulgentiis p. 514 sqq.

[2] It was formally sanctioned in a declaration by Sixtus IV. in the year 1477. Amort de origine, progressu, valore et fructu indulgentiarum. P. ii. p. 292. *Gieseler* ii. 4. § 147. s. 355. Note q.

[3] In this point of view, *Indulgences* also show the legal tendency of the Catholic Church in the middle ages, and its declension from evangelical principles to those of the Old Testament, for it was peculiar to the latter to introduce an arithmetical relation between the righteousness of men and the mercy of God, between the sum of the particular acts of obedience to the law, and that of the particular transgressions in the life of men, whereas the New Testament says nothing of any such relation of quantity, but rests everything upon the unity of the disposition and bent of the will. See the shrewd remarks of *Gurlitt* Stud. und Krit. 1840. 4. s. 952.

God and man, and his atoning death in general, but his several outward sufferings and their quantity, in which its value and importance consisted. In like manner, on the part of the saints, it was not their peculiar and more exalted moral and religious character, but their several works, and especially the *volume* rather than the worth of these, which was taken into account; and the whole was handled as something totally disconnected with their persons, as an objective fund, *a sum of ready money* in the Church's hands. According to the same category, the imputation of the merits of Christ and the saints was described as a purely external transference of a portion of that sum to one who needed it. For although a penitent frame of mind was required of the sinner, still *it was not for the sake, nor according to the measure of that*, that the merit of Christ and the saints were transferred to him, but solely for the sake of some service performed by him for the Church, and this performance again is quite an external and isolated work. Even the transference itself is not a religious and moral transaction, but of a purely judicial nature, emanating not from a religious personage as such, for he might be in mortal sin at the time, but only from such a personage in as far as he possessed or shared the judicial power of the Church. The whole was thus a legal proceeding, a computation of magnitudes, which, under such a form, had no existence in this field, an external work in glaring contrast with the essentially spiritual nature of Christianity. At the same time, as respects the merits of the saints, the theory of Indulgence rests on the supposition, that a man, who is still human, although a saint, may not only possess a sufficiency of merit to answer his own need before God, but may likewise do more than the Divine law demands of him, and thus acquire a surplus of merit for the use of others. Even this is a monstrous supposition, but still more monstrous perhaps is another which invades the religious domain and the glory of God. In point of fact, the doctrine and practice of Indulgences gives the Church a position as an absolutely unerring and omniscient judicial power. It identifies the tribunal of the Church with that of God, and the tribunal of the Pope with that of the Church, thereby indirectly identifying *the Pope's* with *God's*, so that the Pope is raised to a position, in virtue of which, as the visible head of the mystical body of

Christ, and as the dispenser of all penalties and graces, he decides the highest questions involving the salvation of the living and the dead, according to his mere good pleasure. Granting, however, that the whole doctrine were well founded, the position assigned to the Pope would be one elevated far above the reach of fancy, and could be designated only as that of a terrestrial god. What an infinite amount of obligation would it impose upon the Papacy, and with what conscientiousness sharpened to the utmost, ought the Popes, if they were bold enough to believe that such plenitude of power had actually been lodged in the hands of any child of the dust, to have dispensed the lofty blessings committed to their trust? How carefully ought they to have guarded them from perversion and debasement? And yet what do we see? Abuse upon abuse, and profanation upon profanation, in an ascending scale for more than two centuries, until at last moral indignation bursts like a tempest upon their impiety.

Innocent III. had, even at the commencement of the 13th century, restrained various abuses of their authority, committed by the Bishops in the matter of Indulgence.[1] The only object, however, for which this was done was to open a more boundless field for the exercise of the grace upon the part of the *Pope*. From that time Indulgence was regarded as a privilege of the Romish see. The Popes acted as if they possessed an unrestricted lordship over the Divine favours. No doubt they should have had a sufficient reason for every Indulgence they granted, but what that reason was no one was permitted to enquire. The question which would now sound like a jest, "Why the Pope, having sufficient authority for the purpose, did not with one word release all souls from Purgatory?[2] was at that time debated by the theologians with solemn earnestness. The answer they gave was: if God himself exercises his compassion in such a manner

[1] References in *Gieseler* B. ii. Abth. 2. § 82. s. 497.

[2] Not quite in mockery, but as one of the "acute and cunning questions of the common man" which are so hard to answer, Luther in his 82d Thesis has the words, "Why does the Pope not at once deliver all souls from Purgatory for the sake of sacred charity, and in compassion of their pains, than which there can be no holier reasons, while for the sake of perishable gold, which is the very worst reason, he frees numbers?"

as not to do away with the fear of his justice, much more must his servant act upon the same principle; and therefore the blessings of the Church must be dispensed with discretion and moderation. For if this were not the case, God would withhold his approbation.[1] During the 14th century Indulgences were multiplied from the most multifarious causes, and more and more came to be granted for money; at last, indeed, a regular list of prices was drawn out, so that what had been already treated in theory as a sort of traffic with ecclesiastical blessings now also assumed in practice the shape of a mercantile transaction, and the business was carried on with a punctuality and attention which[2] would have done honour to the first commercial house in the world. The mischief attained a still greater height under the Popes of Avignon, and those of the schism. Divested of their old Roman dignity and independence, the former generally turned their attention to pecuniary speculations; while the latter, dividing between them the countries of Christendom, endeavoured, each within his own jurisdiction, to raise as large an amount as the single Pope used to collect from the whole domain of the Church. The Council of Constance recognising the evils connected with the sale of Indulgences, endeavoured to restrain them,[3] but without success; and subsequently, as the Council of Basle, although in other respects imbued with reformatory zeal, granted indulgences on its own authority,[4] never was the system more shamefully abused than in the course of the 15th century.

From the first the great body of the *people* had looked upon Indulgence, in a very gross and carnal light, as the forgiveness *of sins* granted for a fixed service or *price*, in fact, as the sale of eternal salvation for money. They had troubled themselves very little with the repentance and confession which were insinuated as conditions; and in point of fact, they might very simply argue, If contrition and repentance are of real value,

[1] The difficulty is solved in the Summa Astesana (a casuistic work of the Minorite Astesanus in the year 1330) Lib. v. tit. 40.

[2] To borrow the language of Planck.

[3] Proofs in *Gieseler* ii. 4. § 147. s. 351. Note a.

[4] Ibid. s. 351. Note. b.

why is a price also demanded?[1] If a price be necessary to implement their insufficiency, contrition and repentance cannot be of any great moment. In these low views, the people were abundantly confirmed by the practice of many of the preachers of Indulgence, who, in order to promote its sale, extolled its efficacy upon both the living and the dead, by arguments which either absolutely omitted, or at least cast into the shade, all religious and moral requirements.

An abuse of this sort could not become prevalent in the Church without originating attempts to put a stop to it, on the part of pious and serious men. From the 13th century, when the system reached its maturity, loud and many were the voices raised by learned theologians, preachers, and poets, in condemnation of the sale of Indulgence, or in endeavours to bring it back to the purity of its origin, and separate from it all that was injurious to morality. The worse the corruption grew, the louder and more powerful also became the *opposition*. In the course of the 15th century especially it spread far and wide, and assumed a character of greater determination; and at last, at the commencement of the 16th, gave the watchword of the Reformation in the Theses of *Luther*. But long before Luther's bold protest, others had spoken out upon the matter with even greater intrepidity and more comprehensive views, and foremost among these stands *John of Wesel*. As we propose to pourtray *Wesel* in the character of *Luther's forerunner* in this matter, it is proper that we should recollect at the same time who was *Wesel's* own, and here we once more meet a person of whom we have already had occasion repeatedly to speak—viz., *Jacob of Jüterbock*.

Jocob of Jüterbock, like many divines of the period, wrote a special *Treatise upon Indulgences*.[2] For this the jubilee of 1450

[1] In this sense, *Luther*, in his 87th Thesis, puts the following into the mouth of the "common man:" "Why does the Pope issue or dispense his Indulgence to those who, having perfectly repented, have a right to perfect forgiveness and remission?"

[2] Jacobi *Junterburgii* de Indulgentiis Tractatio. *Walch* Monim. med. aev. vol. ii. fasc. 2. p. 163—270.

appears to have furnished the occasion;[1] as the chief object of the work was, to calm the minds of his monastic brethren, who were precluded from travelling to Rome to obtain the promised benefit. The graces of the year of Jubilee being at first, as is well known, connected with a pilgrimage to that city, and not until, afterwards, extended to foreign countries, "It might seem," says the author,[2] "that monks are in a worse condition than laymen, as respects the remission of sin and guilt by Indulgences, inasmuch as they are totally unable to procure them, being forbidden to quit their monasteries, and much too poor to pay the price. In point of fact many monks are deeply afflicted on this account," and the author confesses that at one time he was himself among the number of those who, "conscious of their failings, looked fondly upon Indulgences as a means by which these might be purged away." Persons experiencing such feelings are, by *Jacob of Jüterbock*, referred[3] to the founders of monachism, and to the objects which they had in view. "We do not read," he says, "that St Benedict, although he passed several years in a cave in the vicinity of Rome, was a great seeker of Indulgences; and just as little was St Jerome, who, in a letter to Bishop Paulinus, declares, that that which is truly commendable is 'not to have visited Jerusalem, but to have lived a good life.' Such men, however, would certainly never have neglected to adopt among their rules, that their disciples were to hunt after Indulgences, if they had known that that was salutary for monks." If we here consider that *St Thomas* contends for the extension to monks of the benefit of Indulgence,[4] we will perceive in these statements, and especially in the style in which they are expressed, a depreciation of their value. This, however, is still more distinctly evinced[5] by the author's affirming in the sequel, that *Indulgences*, as being designed to cover the lack of merit by draughts of it from the Church's store, *are intended properly* for the *poor and*

[1] He refers also to the year of Jubilee, its origin and rise. Cap. 43. s. 252. According to *Trithemius* de script. eccles. cap. 814. p. 191, Jacob v. J. wrote a separate tract entitled de anno jubilaeo.

[2] Caps. 1 and 2.

[3] Cap. 3.

[4] Sumin. Suppl. Quaest. xxvii. art. 2. see p. 244.

[5] Cap. 11.

the beggars of the Church; and as it is more blessed to give than to receive, it follows that the recipients of indulgence are in a condition much worse than theirs who collect that treasure. "The treasure, however," he proceeds,[1] "is collected by the perfect men, and the life of the monks, as being devoted to contemplation, is the more calculated to do honour to God by charity and good works. It is not the business of monks, therefore, to be begging for indulgences, but rather to be augmenting the treasure of them. In this way they ought to be rich in order to relieve the poverty of others. Let the laity, however, who are the paupers of the monks, receive from them their supplies."

As respects the doctrine of Indulgence in general, *Jacob of Jüterbock*, averse to deviate from the Doctors of theology and the canon law, adheres to the received views, especially as laid down by *St Thomas*.[2] Partly, however, he gives prominence to a point greatly overlooked at the time, and wholly cast into the shade by the preachers of Indulgence, that indulgence affects merely the *penalties* of sin, not sin itself or sin's guilt, and solely the *temporal* and *ecclesiastical penalties*, and that it can only benefit those who are in venial sin, and not those who are in mortal.[3] Partly he seeks to obviate mistakes, and improves the opportunity to impose very serious restrictions, as is evident from the following particulars. No doubt *Jacob of Jüterbock* assigns supreme and exclusive authority to the Pope[4] in dispensing Indulgences, while to the other prelates and officers of the Church, he concedes only as much as the Pope chooses to devolve upon them; at the same time he limits this to solemn and public, or, as it was called, Plenary Indulgence. On the other hand, he affirms that "*private indulgence* granted upon confession, is competent to *every priest*, in all cases that concern him, and so far as his jurisdiction extends."[5] Whether the efficacy of indulgence extends to the pains of Purgatory, he is at least doubtful. In one passage he denies that it has any efficacy upon these at all,[6] and assigns as the reason, that persons in Purgatory are not under the authority of him who dispenses the indulgence, and could

[1] Cap. 12.
[2] Cap. 4, and those following.
[3] Cap. 6. Cap. 40.
Cap 16.
[5] Cap. 14.
[6] Cap. 27.

know nothing of it except by special revelation; in another passage[1] he concedes that indulgence may avail even before the tribunal of God, but adds, This must not be understood, as if a year's indulgence stood for a year in Purgatory, because the pains of that state are much more severe than those of the present life. A year's indulgence is to be understood as what God would appoint in Purgatory as the equivalent for a year's penalties in this life, supposing these not to be remitted, a thing for which man possesses no measure. The mistaken notion that indulgence effects the remission, not merely of punishment, but likewise of guilt, he meets as follows:[2] "Where forgiveness is offered both from guilt and punishment, either this must not be understood in a strict sense, but generally as implying confession and repentance, by which the guilt is taken away, or it is to be understood of the forgiveness of venial guilt. Still I do not recollect to have seen many Papal epistles in which the remission of punishment and likewise of guilt is proclaimed. There is rather ground to fear that this is an interpolation by itinerant vendors, who frequently extend indulgence beyond all due limits, and deceive the multitude. If, however, there be Papal letters which contain such expressions, they must be understood in the sense explained, and when a full remission *(plena remissio)* of punishment and guilt is guaranteed by the Pope,[3] this is done to distinguish it from a partial *(semiplena)* forgiveness, which any other party besides the Pope may grant, but always on the presumption that the sinner, in virtue of the Papal supremacy, has made his confession at the place where the indulgence is granted, and then receives absolution and acquittal from all penalties and satisfactions." Probably, however, the most important topics which occur in the treatise are, First, that the author, although recognising Indulgence as a discharge from the satisfactions imposed by the Church, nevertheless hints[4] that the *actual performance* of these may be *of more use* than to take advantage of the discharge, and that for a twofold reason; because thereby a direct satisfaction is made for the sins remitted at confession, and a compensation paid to the Divine justice; and further, because such

[1] Cap. 30. [2] Cap. 40. [3] Cap. 41.
[4] Cap. 6. s. 174.

performance is a remedy against future sins. In the second place, the author in connexion with the same subject observes at the close,[1] "In these days the prelates of the Churches, finding how hard it is to persuade the people to exercise a proper penitence, have multiplied indulgences, out of concern for the salvation of their souls. In the primitive Church, however, men were greatly more disposed to repentance, and for that reason far less was said about indulgences."

In *Jacob of Jüterbock* we see a person who, though the corruption had reached a great height, speaks of it in the gentlest and most sparing terms, and only ventures to hint at some improvement. On the other hand, *John of Wesel* has advanced farther, comes forward with greater power, and begins to lay the axe to the root of the tree. The festival of the *year of Jubilee* furnished him with the occasion to take the field. In his trial for heresy at Mayence, being questioned when he wrote his treatise upon Indulgence, he replied, "At the time Indulgences were dispensed, and the year before."[2] The expression "when Indulgences were dispensed," can only refer to the year of Jubilee. During the period of *Wesel's* manhood, however, two such festivals took place, one in 1450 under Clement VI., and another about 1475, under Sixtus IV. In 1450 *Wesel* was still in Erfurt; in 1475 he was a preacher in Worms. Inasmuch, therefore, as in the introduction to his treatise he speaks of himself as "called to be a professor of Holy Scripture," there can be no doubt that we must understand the Jubilee year of 1450, which was prolonged into 1451, to be meant. This Jubilee, however, was all the more calculated to excite and inflame *Wesel*, that in 1451, Cardinal von *Cusa* visited Erfurt, as a preacher of Indulgence, and afforded *Wesel* an opportunity of witnessing its effects. The only difficulty is that *Wesel* was not made a Doctor of Divinity until 1456. Still either this date cannot be entirely relied on, or he was, as many then were, a

[1] Cap 47. s. 269.

[2] Tempore eo, quando fuerunt Indulgentiae, scripsi Tractatum de Indulgentiis et anno praecedenti. This date is taken from the manuscript copy of his prosecution for heresy, to be examined hereafter.

professor before he was a doctor of theology. At all events, it is a point chronologically settled, that the Treatise against Indulgence was composed either immediately before or immediately after the year 1450. Inasmuch then as the celebration of this year of Jubilee was the special occasion which provoked *Wesel* to controversy, and as the institution of Jubilees in general is closely interwoven with the whole system of Indulgence, we shall here say a word on the subject.

The Christian, or to speak more properly, the Romish *year of Jubilee*, is connected with the Jewish, although across an immense interval of time, and wearing a totally different shape. Among the Jews, the festival whose appointment we find in Leviticus, but which was probably never at all, or never properly, introduced into practice, until after the exile, like other theocratical institutions, rested upon a religious foundation, but, at the same time, was of great importance in a civil respect. If it did not originally contemplate, it could not, when applied, fail to effect, among the Jewish people a certain equality of property, and in particular of landed property. In the Septuagint, it also bears the name of the *year of release*, or simply, the release,[1] and with this appellation, which imported that the Jewish year of jubilee was the time for the remission of pecuniary debts, and the reversion of alienated properties to their original possessors, the Christian year of Jubilee corresponded, as the season for a general remission of guilt and restitution, in a moral respect.[2] The institution of the Roman Jubilee took place about the commencement of the 14th century of the Christian era, under the haughty Boniface VIII., who at the close of his life sustained so deep a humiliation. According to the account of a contemporary,[3] and near relative, the impulse, which origi-

[1] ἔτος τῆς ἀφέσεως or ἄφεσις.

[2] *Jacob of Juterbock* de Indulg. cap. 43. p. 252, says, after having mentioned its Old Testament foundation: Ex isto fundamento colligimus, quod annus jubilaeus est *annus dimissionis*. Et ad hujus similitudinem nos vocamus *tempus gratiae* annum jubilaeum, quia illo anno datur a Romano Pontifice remissio plena per indulgentias per eum factas certis locis.

[3] The Pope's grandson, *Jacobus Cajetanus* (Gregorii ad velum aureum diaconi Cardinalis) in the treatise, de centesimo seu Jubilaeo anno liber. Biblioth. Patr. Max. tom. xxv. p. 267 and 936. *Raynald.* Annal.

nated it, did not proceed from the Pope himself, but from the inhabitants of Rome. "So early as the year 1299," he relates, "a rumour circulated in the city, that the first year of the new century, then about to commence, would have so great a virtue, that all the inhabitants of Rome who then visited the Church of Peter, the prince of the Apostles, would obtain a full pardon of sin." The Pope, whose ears this rumour reached, with the view of discovering its foundation, caused a search to be made in old books. Nothing, however, was found, "whether the matter from negligence had not been recorded, or whether the documents relating to it had been lost, or whether there was more of fancy than of fact at work in the whole affair." Nevertheless, upon January 1st of the new century, especially in the evening and till midnight, the people thronged in crowds into the Church of St Peter, and surrounded its altar, as if upon that particular day the highest grace was to be obtained. Other pilgrims soon swelled the throng, especially upon the day when the handkerchief of St Veronica was exhibited. At last a living witness also appeared. An old man, 107 years of age, declared in the presence of the Pope and of others summoned for the occasion, that he well remembered how, 100 years ago, his father, who was a peasant, had gone to Rome to receive indulgence, and how he had then exhorted him, if alive, after the lapse of another 100 years, not to neglect to repair to the city for the same purpose, adding an assurance, that upon every day of that year it was possible to receive an indulgence of a whole century. Although similar vouchers started up in other places, the matter continued a vague rumour; but, notwithstanding, the Pope, in concurrence with the Cardinals, considered it expedient to institute the new devotion. In a bull,[1] of date 22d February 1300, his Holiness, building upon the reliable statements of old men,[2] in virtue of the Divine mercy, with confidence in the merits of the Apostles Peter and Paul, and from the plenitude of his Papal

Eccles. ad ann. 1300. t. xiv. p. 538. *Schröckh* K. G. Th. 28. s. 164 sq. *Gieseler* ii. 2. § 82. s. 499 sq.

[1] It is in the Extravagantes communes Lib. v. Tit. 9. c. 1. and in *Boehmeri* Corp. Jur. can. P. ii. p. 1193. The chief passage in *Gieseler* ii. 2. § 82. s. 499.

[2] Antiquorum habet fida relatio etc.

authority, promises that every one who, in the course of the year 1300, and of every 100th year to come, shall visit with reverence the churches of the Apostles Peter and Paul in Rome, and there do penance and confess his sin, shall obtain not only a full, but *the very fullest forgiveness of all his sins*,[1] it being required in return from every inhabitant of the city, that for thirty days, either in succession or otherwise, he shall visit these churches at least once a day, and from every foreigner, that he shall so visit them for fifteen days.

It is scarcely possible not to suspect that the popular excitement which gave rise to the Jubilee was stirred up by the Pope or the clergy. But whether that were the case or not, at all events the Pope and the Cardinals entered with the liveliest satisfaction into the popular notion, and as the institution which might be connected with it, was too profitable for the Hierarchy, were by no means very strict in the examination of those who vouched for its foundation in antiquity. The year of Jubilee displayed the plenitude of the Papal power with increased brilliancy, gave to the practice of Indulgence a new foundation and fresh spirit, and brought incalculable gain to the city of the Papal residence. In the course of the first year, it is said, that not less than 200,000 pilgrims visited Rome. The advantages, however, rendered it highly desirable that the Jubilee should be frequently repeated. A hundred years are a very long space of time, and how many Popes, and how many inhabitants of Rome might die and never see the return of the blessed season![3] No doubt the Popes spoke of it in other terms. "How many sinful souls," they said, "may depart this life, in so long an interval, without participating in the graces of the Jubilee!" But however that might be, the fact is, that

[1] . . . non solum plenam, sed largiorem, imo *plenissimam omnium suorum* concedimus *veniam peccatorum.*

[2] *Luther* expresses himself with sufficient bitterness on this point, Thesis. 67. "The Indulgences which the preachers proclaim as the greatest mercies, are to be reckoned great mercies indeed, since they bring along with them gain and pleasure."

[3] Clemens VI., in the Bull appointing the Jubilee every 50th year, says: Volentes quam plurimos hujusmodi indulgentiae fore participes, cum pauci multorum respectu propter vitae hominum brevitatem valeant ad annum centesimum pervenire. . . .

Clement VI., induced by a deputation of the citizens, conforming to the custom of the Jewish Jubilee, which took place every 50th year, and urging the mystical import which the number 50 bears, both in the Old and New Testaments, limited the interval between the Jubilees to 50 years, and ordained its repetition in 1350. On this occasion, the number of the pilgrims was estimated at 1,200,000. Not, however, content even with this, Urban VI. (in 1389) fixed every 33d year for the solemnity, and finally Paul II. (in 1470) every 25th. Before, however, that was done, one of the most brilliant of these festivals was celebrated at the time to which we transport ourselves in thought, *i.e.*, in 1450, under Nicolaus V.[1] According to the existing regulation of Urban VI., it ought properly to have fallen in the year 1456. Nicolaus, however, preferred adhering to the older appointment of Clement VI., and fixed upon 1450. The concourse of pilgrims from all the countries of Europe was again immense. At the games appointed for celebration by the Pope (Ludi seculares), several hundred persons are said to have lost their lives by the fall of one of the bridges over the Tiber. But notwithstanding the vast numbers who made the pilgrimage to Rome, the Indulgence was in the following year extended to several countries of Christendom, and, as we have already seen, to Germany.

All this greatly excited *John of Wesel.* At the time of the Jubilee, he composed his *Disputation*, not *about*, but *against* Indulgences,[2] and traces back the institution to its ultimate ground, which he partly calls in question, and partly formally controverts. As this work is not only very characteristic of its author, but one of the most important monuments of the 15th century, we must here give a somewhat complete idea of it. Even the introduction is very remarkable. "We read," says *Wesel*,[3] "the discourses of Jesus Christ the Son of God recorded in the four Gospels. In these the mysteries of salvation, and probably all that is needful for its attainment, are contained, but not a word is said of Indulgence. Afterwards the Apostles

[1] Comp. Schröckh K. Gesch. Th. 33. s. 468 sq.

[2] *Joannis de Vesalia* adversus Indulgentias Disputatio; in *Walchii* Monim. med. aevi. vol. ii. fasc. 1, p. 111—156

[3] Cap. 1.

preached, and wrote their Epistles, and just as little is there any mention of Indulgence by them. In fine, not very long after, the celebrated teachers, Gregory of Nazianzen, Basil of Cesarea, Athanasius, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine, wrote numerous works, which have received, so to speak, the sanction of the Church, and yet they too say nothing of Indulgence. It was not until after St Dominic and St Francis instituted their orders, that men of eminence and learning wrote upon the subject. Even they are far from being unanimous, and express the most diverse and conflicting sentiments. Their opinions, moreover, are the subject of much disputation among scholars in these days in which I, *John of Wesel*, now live.[1] Nay, I myself have debated the value of Indulgence in the schools, and *maintained* its efficacy and Divine authority, *having as a scholar too easily assented to my teachers.*"

It would thus appear that at an earlier period, *Wesel* had advocated in debate the doctrine of Indulgence, but having now been made *doctor of divinity*, and being more seriously asked his opinion upon the subject, he proposes to give a deliberate summary of his convictions. At the same time, he premises a caution, which, like the allusion to the increase of his obligation in consequence of his doctor's degree, reminds us vividly of Luther. "Intending," he says,[2] "to answer the question whether it be in the Pope's power to grant indulgence and thereby absolve the party from all penalties, *I, John of Wesel, being appointed a professor of Holy Scripture*,[3] although the least, *protest* at the outset, *that it is not my intention to say or write any thing* in any way contradictory of the truth of the faith, as that is contained *in Scripture*. If, however, my opinion or averment shall also contradict any, it may be of the sacred teachers, I intend not thereby to impugn his honour or sanctity. For I can

[1] . . . temporibus his, quibus ego *Joannes de Vesalia* in humanis degi.

[2] Cap. 3.

[3] Ego *Joannes de Vesalia* sacrae scripturae professor vocatus, licet minimus, ante omnia protestor. . . . In a similar, though somewhat prouder way, *Luther* commences his tract, in which he made known to the world the burning of the Papal Bull: "I, Martin Luther, Doctor of Holy Scripture, Augustinian Monk at Wittemberg, wish all men to know."

say with St Augustine, that my manner of reading other authors, be they ever so distinguished for holiness and learning, is not to consider any thing to be true, merely because they have thought it so, but because by canonical (scriptural) or probable reasons, they convince me that it does swerve from Scripture."

In this manner, taking his stand, like *Luther*, upon Scripture, and upon clear and evident reasons, and applying them as a test to the authority of all ecclesiastical teachers, as being otherwise insufficient of itself, *Wesel*, with copious citations from Scripture, lays down the following *seven propositions*.[1]

1. On every one who has infringed his law, God, as Law-giver, and in the exercise of his justice, imposes a penalty, and this penalty he does not remit, although in his mercy he may forgive the guilt; for, as Augustine says, God is always merciful in a way that leaves free course to his justice.

2. Christian priests, to whom are committed the keys of heaven, are the ministers of God in the remission of guilt.

3. The penalty which God has imposed upon a transgressor, no man can forgive; for nothing can resist the Divine will.

4. The Holy Scriptures nowhere state, that any priest, or even the Pope, can grant an Indulgence which shall liberate a man from the penalties denounced against him by God.

5. The Pope, however, has it in his power to absolve from the penalties which man or positive law has denounced for sin, because the Pope is appointed by the Church the founder of positive law, in as far as it subserves the Church's edification, and not its destruction.[2]

6. That the penalties, which man or positive law have denounced, correspond with the awards of God's penal justice, in such a manner as that when they are annulled, God's justice is also satisfied, is by no means certain, unless it has been revealed by God. For the Divine will (*Wesel* of course means in such particular cases) is unknown to man, and nothing is said of this in Scripture.

7. The opinion of theological teachers regarding a treasure of the Church, accumulated from the merits of Christ, and the

[1] Cap. 4—10. p115—119.

[2] Quia ipse est ab ecclesia constitutus juris positivi *institutor*, inquantum ad aedificationem ecclesiae facit, non ad destructionem.

supererogatory works of the saints, and committed to the charge of the Pope, is undoubtedly very pious, but is at the same time an opinion to which certain modest objections may be profitably made.[1] In particular, it may be objected that the saints have left behind them on earth no such treasure, because the Scripture says, "Their works do follow them." So long as the saints sojourn in this life their works are by their very nature transitory; and when the saints cease to labour, their works have no independent existence of their own,[2] but in as far as, through the grace of God, they are in any degree meritorious, they follow their authors from the scene of their labour, and enter with them into rest. The works of the saints, accordingly, have no local habitation here below, but are in the place where they who performed them reside. If, during life, the saints earned any merit for others, it was done consonantly with the will of God, who distributes to every one severally as he will. Our merit does not spring from our own will but from God's, and to distribute such merits in the last instance is competent to God alone. If done by a man, holding a Divine commission for the purpose, it can only be done in virtue of some agreement entered into between God and him, such as the teachers maintain is the case in regard to the sacraments. But that any such agreement has ever been made by Jesus with the ministers of the Church is not stated in the Gospel.

These propositions comprise the substance of *Wesel's* sentiments upon Indulgence. Still more weighty, however, are the *reasons* which he proceeds to allege, because in these he enters into an analysis of the most important ideas, such as those of sin, grace, pardon, which goes far beyond the formulas of the received creed, and contains statements strictly consonant with his whole reformatory and antipelagian views.

Indulgence is designated by *Wesel*,[3] according to the current notion, *remission of the temporal penalty for an actual sin*.[4] Of

[1] Opinioni doctorum de thesauro ecclesiae . . . quanquam sit valde pia, salubres tamen sunt debiles objectiones. The word *debiles* is either corrupt, or is used half in irony.

[2] . . . nullum esse habent *secundum se*.

[3] Cap. 11.

[4] . . . remissio ponae temporalis debitae pro peccato actuali.

the pardon and remission of sin, *(remissio et dimissio)* he proceeds, much is said in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, without any distinction being drawn between them. Now, inasmuch as a reference to *debt* is not unfrequently connected with remission, the question arises whether sin and debt are the same. To this it may be answered that every sin is also a debt, but that every debt is not sin, nor every debtor a sinner. For the good and righteous man, and even God himself, is called a debtor without involving any reference to sin. *Sin*[2] is the transgression of the Divine law by thought, word, or deed, and the sinner is consequently a trangressor. On the contrary, he who fulfils the Divine law, is righteous, in virtue of a *righteousness* which is *vouchsafed* to him *by God.* To this I give the name of *grace.* It is what makes man acceptable, and frees him from all that is contrary and displeasing, to God. The idea of sin comprises two elements, one material and the other formal. The material element is desire, word, or deed, and of this every one who commits it is cognizant. The formal element is the breach of the Divine law, or a state of contrariety to it, which is not always matter of consciousness, for many are ignorant of the law, and therefore also ignorant that their desires, words, and actions contravene it; and even those who are acquainted with it do not always know the Lawgiver's will, or in how far he lays any thing to the charge of the party desiring, speaking, and acting. In as far, however, as obedience to the law arises from *grace,* he who violates it does not know that he is destitute of grace, because the lack of grace is not recognized, unless the opposite condition be also known. This formal element in sin, viz., *destitution of grace,* is consequently concealed from the party who sins. At the same time, whoever consciously acts against the law of God has a notion that he is destitute of grace.

The essential evil resulting from sin is the being dispossessed of that which is good, and it is the destitution of that which is good, when such destitution is felt, which engenders punishment.[3] There are therefore in sin two things, the guilt and the penalty. It is not that sin consists of the two; on the contrary, sin is guilt

[1] Cap. 11—15. [2] Cap. 17. [3] Cap. 15.

conjoined with punishment, *(culpa et debitum cum connotatione poenae)* not absolutely but relatively, to wit, by virtue of imputation, *(reatus)* which is a positive reference (of the evil which befalls a person) to the wrong thing (which he has committed). If therefore there be forgiveness of sin, and that there is we express our belief in the creed, we must further explain,[1] in as far as this can be known without injury to faith—for faith is the knowledge of what we may in thought *ap*prehend,[2] but cannot *com*prehend —we must, I say, further explain what the forgiveness of sin is? Now here *Wesel* makes a decided advance beyond the customary definition, for according to the conception he forms of the *forgiveness of sin*, it is not merely a negative but an essentially positive thing, in fact, a translation into the condition opposite to sin. He designates it *the communication and infusion of grace* which makes man *well-pleasing* to God.[3] And inasmuch as it is God alone who communicates and infuses grace, it is asked in Scripture, "Who can forgive sin but God only?[4] Even, however, if God do impart and infuse grace, without antecedent merit, he does not do so to persons who offer obstruction to it, *(obicem ponentibus)*, but only to those who do their utmost to prepare for its reception. How this preparation should be made,[5] God has taught, first by the law revealed in the heart, then by that of Moses, and finally by that of the Gospel; and at all times sinners grown to the age of discretion have been required to repent. Repentance, however, is voluntary sorrow for sins committed, and this is the only frame of mind which corresponds with the forgiveness of sins, consisting as that does in the communication of grace.

If then, in the New Testament law, the pardon of sin by God has annexed to it the condition, that the recipient shall forgive his neighbour, the question arises, in how far it is possible for *a man to forgive sin?* Here *Wesel*[6] distinguishes in the sin committed against a neighbour, the reference to the neighbour and the reference to God. A man sins against another, in as far as

[1] Cap 17.

[2] Fides enim est notitia eorum, quae per intellectum nostrum *com*prehendi non possunt, possunt autem aliqualiter *ad*prehendi.

[3] Cap. 18.

[4] Mark ii 7. Js. xliii. 25. Hos. xiii. 4—14.

[5] Cap. 19. and 20.

[6] Cap. 21 and 22.

he injures him either in his person, property, or relatives. He sins against God in as far as he violates his law. In such a case, if the injured party conceive no resentment, or if he allow his anger to subside, and forego revenge and punishment, he forgives the injuring party his sin. This, however, he can do only as far as his ability reaches. It is further requisite, that God should also forgive the offender, for against Him there has likewise been an offence, and as God is exalted above every man, he can forgive the offender his sin, even when the offended party refuses to do it. If from this point of view then we contemplate the plenary power of pardon committed to priests, it is evident[1] that *no priest can dispense pardon originally and effectually (principaliter et effective)*, but only by the Divine assistance, which lies in the communication of grace. Hence the priestly absolution is a *sacramental service (quoddam ministerium sacramentale)* which is rendered to the penitent sinner, and thus it coincides with the administration of the sacrament of penitence, the effect of which is forgiveness of sin, and in which forgiveness likewise rests upon the communication of grace by God; in virtue of an agreement entered into with the priest.

Wesel lays a marked stress upon the principle,[2] that there is no virtue in the sacrament of penitence to produce any effect, *prior to* the communication of grace. Aware that in this opinion, he differs from many masters and teachers, he yet says that he cannot help it, because *the honour of God constrains him*, requiring, as that seems to do, that *God alone*, of his pure goodness, should be the author and giver of grace. When his opponents urged against him Peter Lombard's definition, that a sacrament is the visible form of invisible grace, and yet, as also involving its cause, is more than a mere image of it, *Wesel*, on the contrary, took his stand upon the simple definition of Augustine, that it is just the visible form of invisible grace. It likewise appeared to him inconceivable, that in several things differing in their nature, substance *(quidditate)* and subject, (and consequently in a transaction so complicated as the sacrament of penitence) there should reside one and the same undivided efficacy, an essential unity, as the sacramental operation might be

[1] Cap. 24 and 25.

[2] Cap. 26.

called. Accordingly the truth, which seemed to him to result,[1] is that when the priest, with right intention and suitable words, dispenses the sacrament of penitence to a person in a penitential frame of mind, *God himself works, produces, and carries into effect the pardon of sin.* In this transaction God was, and still is, pleased to make his servants the priests fellow-workers with himself, so that, as they are the agents in dispensing the sacrament, they are said to forgive. In this, however, the priests cannot do more nor further than God himself, the original pardoner (*principalis remissor*) does and allows. If then God works grace in the soul of the penitent, which is always the case, the effect of the sacrament of penitence is grace. If, however—a subject into which we have still to enquire—God remits also the penalty, the effect is the remission of the penalty.

It is accordingly a question whether God, when he imparts grace, remits also the *penalty*. On this point, *Wesel* quotes[2] the conflicting opinions of the teachers, and then states as his own, that a man committing that kind of sin, which teachers usually denominate mortal, renders himself thereby obnoxious to everlasting punishment, but that by grace, when grace is given to him, he is restored to life eternal, so that whoever receives grace, is freed from liability to everlasting punishment. The case, however, is different with respect to the temporal penalty. On that point[3] sacred Scripture says nothing positive. So much, however, we may learn from it, that many who received grace were yet afterwards appointed to great afflictions. For instance, Jesus himself, though as man he received grace, Peter, Paul, the Apostles, and other disciples, had all sore afflictions to endure. No doubt it is uncertain, whether the disciples of Christ, who sinned, but received grace, were subjected on account of their sins, to the temporal punishments they afterwards suffered, for God may possibly have imposed their sufferings for the purpose of qualifying them for higher degrees of grace and glory. It may also be alleged,[4] that as all God's works are perfect, so also must be his grace, but that no grace is perfect save that which abolishes both eternal and temporal punishment. But then when the work of Divine grace is designated perfect, this must not be understood absolutely, but in a way of its own, and to the

[1] Cap. 23. [2] Cap. 27—23. [3] Cap. 29. [4] Cap. 30.

effect that grace restores man to a condition in which it is possible for him to merit eternal life.[1] With such a condition, however, liability to temporal penalties in consequence of the Divine justice is perfectly consistent; for the perfection of the grace of God is such as does not exclude his justice. *Wesel* accordingly adheres to the principle, that God, in the exercise of his justice, assigns a punishment to every sinner, and does not remit it even when he gives him grace; and this leads him to the chief subject of discussion, namely,

Indulgence. The first question which he here encounters is, *whether such a thing exists at all?* This question he answers as follows:[2] If there be anything which answers to the definition we have given of Indulgence, that thing must in every case be of a spiritual nature, and only discoverable by faith. Faith, however, is based upon revelation. Now whether there be any person who has received a revelation upon the subject of what we call Indulgence, I do not know. At any rate, however, no mention is made of it in those writings, which our faith holds to have been inspired by the Holy Ghost. Nevertheless the teachers who write upon it endeavour to demonstrate its truth from Scripture. This, therefore, is a point which it behoves us closely to investigate.

It is alleged by some[3] that *Indulgence* is dispensed *in virtue of the office of the keys,* so that whoever possesses the keys, possesses also power to dispense Indulgence. The keys of the kingdom of heaven, however, were given equally to Peter and to the rest of the Apostles. And what they imply is explained by the Lord in the words, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." The keys accordingly are a power to remit or to retain sins, by granting or refusing the sacrament of penitence. There is, however, no power in the keys to do anything different from that which *God,* the supreme agent in the matter (*principalis*) does. Inasmuch, however, as, in dispensing the grace which consists in the forgiveness of sins, God does not abolish, but rather imposes, their temporal penalties, so neither is any one, in virtue of the office of the keys, invested with the power of dispensing Indulgence. This appears to me to be an argument of demonstrative force in Theology.

[1] Cap. 32. [2] Cap. 34. [3] Cap. 35.

Others on the contrary allege[1]—and this was the prevailing opinion, and was laid by St Thomas at the foundation of his exposition on the subject[2]—that in the words we have quoted, Jesus entrusted to the Church the *keys of jurisdiction*, and that it is on these keys of jurisdiction that Indulgence is founded. So, says *Wesel*, they indeed affirm, but they do not prove their affirmation. For in neither the Old nor the New Testament is there any mention of the key of jurisdiction, and yet, as St Augustine in his day remarks upon Ps. lxvii., a statement is only true when it does not set aside the authority of either of these sacred Scriptures. The jurisdiction which we now find in the Church was, as even St Jerome confesses, instituted by *men*, and to derive Indulgence from the key of jurisdiction is childish.

An attempt is, however, made to lay another and further basis for Indulgence by the proposition, that the penalties due for sin are compensated by those which Christ and all other innocent sufferers have borne, and by the supererogatory merit of the works of Christ and of the saints, both those who have departed this life and those who still survive. They who entertain this opinion, says *Wesel*,[3] figure to themselves that there exists a *treasure* made up of the merits of Christ, the saints, and the Church, and that it is from this fund the needful supplies are allotted to those who live in charity, but who are still without the remission of the penalties they have incurred; provided they do what the dispenser enjoins. In connexion with this, they also maintain, that the Bishop of Rome dispenses the treasure, and has the privileges of Indulgence at his disposal. "O how blessed a thing it would be," exclaims *Wesel*, "if in any such a way the penalties of sin could be remitted!" To this opinion, however, there are many objections, some of which may be deduced from what we have already said; and some may be further urged.[4]

In the first place, if the penalties due for sin are compensated by means of those of Christ and the saints, it might be asked by whom are they compensated? If it be said, that God is the

[1] Cap. 42. [2] Supplem. Quaest. xxv. art. 2. see above p. 243.
[3] Cap. 43. [4] Cap. 44.

party, then it is inconceivable, that he should effect by compensation what he can effect directly, for it would suffice, if for the sake of Christ's penal sufferings he were to impose no punishment. If, again, it be alleged that this party is a human being, viz. the Pope, then we have to reply, that no human being knows what amount of penalty the sinner has in the Divine judgment deserved, and hence that no human being can assign the equivalent to it. If it be said, that God knows the penalty due to the sinner, and that when, from the treasure of the Church, he allots to him a suitable equivalent, he accepts of the same (as a satisfaction), the question arises, Who certifies us that God does accept of it? This could only be certified by a Divine revelation, and to whom has any such fact been revealed? In fine, if it be said,[1] that the truth is corroborated by the word of the Lord: "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven,"[2] that many more than two have agreed in the prayer that God would permit the sufferings of his Son and saints to stand for the sufferings of others who have sinned, that this has now been accorded by the heavenly Father, and that these many have committed the distribution to the Pope, so that to him the work of compensation pertains, we have to answer,[3] that the Lord himself expressly restricted his words, by the saying which immediately follows, viz., "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."[4] Now all do not meet together in the name of Jesus, who say "Lord, Lord," or "Jesus, thou art our God;" for many meet in that way who do not obtain the object of their prayers; but only they are meant, whom the Divine will, anticipating their prayers, brings together. That this is the meaning no one will doubt who believes that God confers his graces according to the freedom of his will.[5] Now it is incredible that God will interfere, and determine several to pray for a thing which is unbecoming his justice. To leave the transgressor unpunished, however, and accept of the punishment of the innocent in place of the guilty party, would be a violation of the Divine justice;

[1] Cap. 45. [2] Matth. xviii. 19. [3] Cap. 46.
[4] Matth. xviii. 20. [5] 1 Cor. xii. 11, 18.

whereas the very smallest penalty endured by the transgressor himself may be acceptable and pleasing to God, even for many and great sins.

In the second place,[1] if the punishment of parties who sin were to be compensated by that of the innocent, no punishment would await the guilty soul in the life to come, and so there would be no need of supposing a *purgatory* after the present life. There does, however, exist a purgatory, and consequently certain punishments must be kept in reserve for it. That the expectation of a purgatory after the present life is well founded,[2] appears in the first place by the saying of the Lord:[3] "Agree with thine adversary . . . lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison." The place of this prison must not be sought in the present life, but in the life to come, and in that, it cannot be hell (inasmuch as a prospect of escape from it is held out.) It must, therefore, be purgatory. It is also shewn by the saying of Christ,[4] "Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in the world to come." For here a possibility of forgiveness is supposed, and somewhere in the world to come. That is not, however, the case in hell, and so the place meant must be purgatory. In fine, the Apostle points to purgatory, when he says,[5] "The fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss, yet he himself shall be saved." For this passage cannot refer to the flames of hell, of which the Lord declares that they are destined for everlasting destruction.[6]

In fine, *Wesel* also refers[7] to the opinion, that Indulgence is the remission of the punishment assigned for sin by the *law* or by *man*. And here he says: It must be recollected that the holy fathers not being aware of either the nature or the magnitude of the punishment appointed by God for sins according to their best convictions, settled that certain penalties should be imposed by confessors upon their penitents. Several penalties of the kind are set down in the laws of the Church, and it is customary to say of them, that they are imposed by law. Others are left to

[1] Cap. 47. [2] Cap. 48. [3] Matth. v. 25.
[4] Matth. x 32 [5] 1 Cor. iii. 13, 15. [6] Matth. xxv. 41.
[7] Cap. 49.

the discretion of confessors, and are therefore said to be imposed by men. At the same time, the holy fathers imagined that by such penances, punishments, and works, satisfaction was made to God, who for that reason either wholly or in part remitted his punishment. As these notions, however, are not authorized by Holy Scripture, their weight depends upon themselves, and it may be said[1] that the sort of remissions which we call Indulgences, are a *pious fraud* practised upon believers, as many priests have already declared. The reason, however, why they are a pious fraud, is because they tempt believers to make pilgrimages to holy places, to give alms for pious uses, to build churches, and equip warriors against the infidel, under the notion that by that means they shall be absolved from the penalties due to them for their sins, and escape the pains of purgatory in the life to come. By this notion they are deluded, and in so far there is a *fraud.* Inasmuch, however, as it is likewise true that these works are done in the love of God, they become meritorious for those who perform them, and conducive to eternal life, and consequently there is also in the matter some degree of piety and usefulness.

For these reasons, *Wesel* deems himself justified[2] in giving a negative answer to the question: Can the truth of Indulgence be demonstrated from Scripture? The age in which he lived, however, recognized another authority, as superior to that of Scripture—viz., the *Church.* And on every side, and from all the usual text-books of theology, two counter arguments were levelled against him. In the first place, it was alleged, *The Church is infallible,* and the Church sanctions indulgence, therefore indulgence must be valid. In the second place, If the Church, by the indulgences it grants, does not really absolve from the Divinely-appointed penalties, it does far more *harm* than *good,* because, while pronouncing the sinner absolved from all such penalties as satisfy for sin in this life, it dismisses him to the far more severe inflictions of purgatory. To these allegations, *Wesel* gives the following answer:[3] That the *Catholic Church is infallible,* is a *mere assertion* in support of which no proof, either from reason or Scripture, is advanced. If, however, we endeavour strictly to

[1] Cap. 50. [2] Cap. 51. [3] Cap. 52.

investigate the matter, it must be understood at the outset, that the word *Church* is a collective name, and combines the idea of multitude with that of unity. The unity it involves, however, is always particularly specified by some adjunct, as for example when it is said, The Church of the saints. In that case it is the unity of holiness which constitutes the Church. Or if it were said the Church of the wicked, then the constituent unity would be wickedness. Or supposing the expression to be, the Church at Ephesus or Smyrna, then identity of place is the bond of union. These definitions occur in Scripture, but the Church of which we speak, and which we call the *Universal Church*, is not mentioned in Scripture, and not even hinted at by Peter. Universal is synonymous with Catholic, and under this name the Church figures, both in the Nicene and in the Apostles' creed. As the universal or Catholic Church, however, we may designate all who believe Jesus to be God and man, and the name Catholic is given to it, because the preaching of Christ, by which alone faith is produced, is spread over the whole world. In consonance with this must the proposition that the Catholic Church cannot err be understood.[1] We mean, that inasmuch as the Catholic Church embraces the *Church of Christ*, which is founded upon a rock, and against which the gates of hell shall never prevail,[2] and inasmuch as this Church (the Christian Church in a narrower sense) is holy and undefiled,[3] there exists no error in it, none at least that is self-induced, because that would be a spot or wrinkle. In virtue, therefore, of the Church of Christ being a part of that which is Catholic, the proposition that the Catholic Church does not err is true. The reason of its truth, however, lies in the fact that the proposition is ambiguously expressed, inasmuch as the truth of it holds only in regard to one of its parts. Co-existent with this (partial) truth, however, there is another,[4] viz., *That the Universal Church does err*, and that she is an adulteress and whore, the reason being that she is in part composed of wicked men. The result is, that the argument drawn from the infallibility of the Church is inconclusive, because it applies only to a part of it. The proposition, however, that *the Church grants indul-*

[1] Cap. 53. [2] Mat. xvi. 18. [3] Eph. v. 27. [4] Cap. 54.

gence, comes from that part of the Church which does err. The other argument, that the Church in incompetently granting indulgence would do more harm than good, *Wesel* fully admits,[1] but he gives it a turn contrary to that of the Schoolmen. They inferred the validity of indulgence from the fact that it is dispensed by the Church. He says that the Church ought not to dispense it, because it is founded upon error.

Such is the substance of *John of Wesel's* treatise against Indulgence,—a treatise which likewise derives high importance from the style of its controversy. It is interesting to see, how he penetrates into all the joints of the Scholastic and Ecclesiastical system, inserts the wedge of a skilful logic at every open chink, and endeavours to rend it asunder. He manifests in his opposition an advance considerably further, not only than any other of his predecessors or cotemporaries, but even than Luther himself in his 95 Theses, although the two substantially agree. Not merely does he combat the abuses and excrescences of Indulgence, but the thing itself; and what is most important of all, he does this, not, like so many in the same ranks of the opposition both before and after him, by mere negations, but by opposing to the fundamentals of the doctrine another and a higher truth, and that a truth entwined with all his views as a Reformer, and constituting the basis of his entire theology. The radical ideas, which were the starting point of *Wesel's* controversy, are manifestly those of the Divine justice, and the Divine mercy, especially the latter. To keep these ideas pure, unimpaired, and unadulterated, was his chief object, and as they appeared to him to be infringed and corrupted by the system of Indulgence, he took the field against it convinced that in combatting that system, he was promoting the glory of God. The Divine Being, thought *Wesel*, is just and merciful, but in him neither must justice curtail mercy, nor mercy, justice; and still less must the exercise of his justice be disturbed by the admixture of human agency. If then, on the one hand, Divine justicec alls for punishment, and this punishment cannot, by human satisfaction or imputation, be done

[1] Cap. 53.

away, recovering and succouring mercy in all its freeness and purity interposes on the other hand, and does away, if not the penalty and consequences of sin, yet at least sin itself and its guilt; and this effect it substantially produces by communicating to the sinner strength to do good, and translating him into a state in which, so to speak, he can start afresh upon the way to sanctification and glory. Divine mercy requires on the part of man, as its only essential condition, repentance; and the two, mercy and repentance, comprise all that belongs to the recovery of a sinner. Thus it is that *Wesel* considers the relation of the sinner to God as in its inmost core direct. It obtains solely betwixt God or Christ and sinful man. Then comes the Church, but only in virtue of its Divine commission, to mediate, and with its priesthood, to minister between the two, but these can give nothing to the sinner which God has not already and directly given him. Their function is not to judge and decide, but merely to preach and serve. The gifts of his mercy proceed always in a sovereign way from God himself. Inasmuch, however, as they are conveyed through the ministry of the priesthood, there arises the sacramental action, and it is as being of that character that *Wesel* considers the remission of sin and its guilt. This constituted a very decided contradiction to the theory of the *Schoolmen*. Indulgence, conceived as acquittal from the punishment of sin, and emanating from the authority of the Church, was grounded, at least according to the general opinion, upon the power of the keys. The *Schoolmen* on their side, however, had made a distinction between the key of priesthood *(clavis ordinis)*, and the key of jurisdiction *(clavis jurisdictionis)*, and a question arose to which of the two keys pertained the plenary power of Indulgence. The *Schoolmen* decided in favour of the former, *Wesel* in favour of the latter, but in a way which led him to subvert Indulgence altogether. This is a main point in his controversy. What he says is: If the forgiveness of sins emanate from the key of the priesthood, it is sacramental, part and parcel of the sacrament of penitance. Such, in fact, was the view which, adopting the persuasion of the early Church, *Wesel* considered sound. In that case, however, it is also a matter that belongs to God, from whom alone sacramental operations take

their rise;[1] and the priest is but the minister who announces the Divine pardon of sin, and the abolition of its punishment, when its punishment is really abolished. If it emanate, however, from the key of jurisdiction, it is, as even Thomas Aquinas did not deny, a human award, in which case there is no possibility of proving that it exactly coincides with God's. That is a point we could only know by special revelation, and neither the Pope nor the Church possesses any special revelation on the subject. Moreover, the title to assume a key of jurisdiction would require to be first demonstrated, and that cannot be done, for there is no trace of anything of the kind either in Scripture or the ancient Church. In this manner, *Wesel* impugns, as destitute of any substantial foundation, the identification of the tribunal of the Church, and more particularly of the Pope, with that of God, and as not less unscriptural, the second main basis of the theory of Indulgence, viz. the doctrine of the treasure of good works and of its objective existence; and when at last, from lack of sufficient scriptural reasons, the reigning theology appealed to the absolute authority and infallibility of the Church, he does not hesitate to attack this bulwark, and without having recourse to the distinction subsequently drawn between the visible and invisible Church of God, he draws a similar distinction between the Church universal and the Church of Christ, and to the latter alone concedes the prerogative of infallibility. Although, however, the keenness of controversy leads *Wesel* so far as to call Indulgence a pious fraud, he is at the same time sufficiently equitable to acknowledge, that mixed up with the deception there was something at least subjectively pious in the case of every work performed from love to God.

Whether *Wesel's* treatise and doctrine on the subject of Indulgence exercised any influence in developing the views of *Luther*, cannot with certainty be determined. The thing is possible and even probable, considering that *Luther*, when at

[1] *Thomas* Aquinas says in the Summa Theol. Suppl. Quaest. xxv. art. 2.: Quia sacramentorum effectus non sunt determinati ab homine, sed a Deo, ideo non potest taxare sacerdos, quantum per clavem ordinis in foro confessionis de poena debita dimittatur; sed tantum dimittitur, quantum Deus ordinavit.

Erfurt, studied his works, and that independently of these, his opinions certainly continued for long to operate upon that University. At any rate, in *Wesel's* polemics there is not a little which reminds us of *Luther*. Let me refer to a few main instances. Like him, *Luther* founded the pardon of sins singly and solely upon the Divine mercy on the one hand, and upon repentance on the other. He says in the 36th Thesis, "Every Christian who truly repents of his sins, and mourns over them, obtains full remission of both punishment and guilt; and does so even without any letter of indulgence; and in the thesis which follows, "A true Christian, whether sojourning on this earth, or departed from it, is made partaker of all the blessings of Christ and the Church, by the gift of God and without any letter of indulgence." In *Luther's* view also, the relation of Divine grace to the sinner is direct, for he says, in the 58th Thesis, "The merits of Christ and the saints produce, at all times and without the Pope's interference, grace in the inner man. Equally with *Wesel*, he denies that Indulgence, in and of itself, has any efficacy in procuring the forgiveness of sin; "On the contrary, we affirm," is the language of the 76th Thesis, "that the Pope's Indulgence cannot take away the very smallest of our daily sins, so far as its guilt is concerned." The two likewise entirely agree in making the personal qualification for dispensing indulgence, depend upon the sentiments with which the power is exercised. For, as *Wesel* says, "the work of Indulgence may be a pious and profitable work, if it be done from the love of God;" so is the language of *Luther* to the same effect in the 47th Thesis: "Christians ought to be taught that the Pope's Indulgence is good, if no reliance is placed upon it; on the contrary, however, nothing is more pernicious, if it lead men to forget God." In spite of all this, however, when *Wesel* composed his treatise against Indulgences, he was theoretically far in advance of *Luther*, at the time *Luther* published his Theses. In controversy likewise he was clearer, more self-reliant and comprehensive. The view he took of the whole system and its ultimate reasons was wider than *Luther's*, which, although not destitute of vigour, depth, and boldness, still wavered somewhat in knowledge, and was levelled against transitory blemishes. Nor could *Wesel* have ever been induced to say what *Luther* says in the 71st Thesis, and said, as there can be no doubt, at the time, with the deepest

conviction, "Whosoever speaks against the truth of the Papal Indulgence, let him be cursed and execrated." On the other hand, that which made *Luther's* Theses practically and historically of greater consequence, was the progress of the age, their coincidence with other important affairs, the many references to existing things, their fresh and popular tone, the connexion of the author with more eminent personages, and especially the circumstance that they were not a mere learned treatise, but an act which constituted at once a signal and a challenge to conflict.

PART SECOND.

JOHN OF WESEL

AND

THE DEPRAVED CLERGY.

CHAPTER FIRST.

WESEL AS PREACHER AT MAYENCE. THE RHINELAND. WORMS. WESEL'S THEOLOGY AND PRACTICE.

After having laboured for about twenty years as a teacher, and for ten at least as a regular professor of theology of Erfurt, *Wesel* was called—probably about 1460—as a preacher to *Mayence*.[1]

[1] *Luther*, in his disquisition De Conciliis § 192. Th. 16. s. 2743 in *Walch*, says of *Wesel*, "Who was preacher at *Mayence*." This is considered by Christ. Wilh. Franz *Walch* (Monim. med. aev. ii., 1. Praef. p. lvi.) as an error. He says that it was at Mayence that *Wesel* was condemned, but that he was a preacher only at Worms. *Walch's* opinion, however, ought rather to be rectified by that of Luther, who being so near a contemporary of *Wesel*, and taking so deep an interest in him, must have been acquainted with the fact. *Melancthon* also calls *Joh. of Wesel*, Concionatorem *Moguntinum*, in the Respons. script. ad impios artic. Bavaricae inquisitionis. Witteb. 1559. 8. Bogen B. 3. 6. Comp. Stud. und Krit. 1828. 2. s. 400. The author of the Monography on Diether of Isenburg, Frankf. 1792, believes that *Wesel* was preacher in the Cathedral of Mayence in 1468. This, how-

Owing to the close connexion of the two places, it seems to have been customary to call distinguished teachers and preachers from the seat of the University to that of the archiepiscopal residence. We find two additional instances occurring in the course of the 15th century. The first was *John of Lutter*,[1] a man who had gained distinction as a preacher at Erfurt, and who continued in the zealous exercise of the office until his death in 1479. The second was Master *Eggeling* or Engelin from Brunswick,[2] who was even greater than the former as a theologian, enjoyed also an extraordinary reputation as a preacher, and, after labouring for a considerable period at Mayence, terminated his life at Strasburg in 1481. These two persons were preceded at Mayence by *John of Wesel*, who did not, however, hold the office so long as either of them, for it is said, and the fact is not creditable to his courage, that a pestilence frightened him from his post probably not very long after he had entered upon it. He then obtained a similar situation in *Worms*, which he occupied for seventeen years, and only resigned, as we shall afterwards see, to end his days in prison. As, next to Erfurt, Worms was the chief theatre of *Wesel's* labours, and as these mainly related to the Church, it will be proper to take a view of the theological and ecclesiastic condition of that city, and its environs, as the natural introduction to an account of them.

It is impossible not to see that at that time as regards Germany, the chief seat of culture and intellectual activity lay in the Southern districts, on the *Rhine downwards*, and extended in the central, as

ever, cannot be true, because on the supposition that it is, the seventeen years could not be made up, which, we know for certain, *Wesel* afterwards passed at *Worms*, previous to his trial for heresy.

[1] *Trithemius* calls him *Johannes de Lutria*, De script. eccles. c. 849. p. 202. and de *Lutra* villula, de script. Germ. c. 214, which is probably Lutter on the Barenberg. The works which *Trithemius* ascribes to him are: Super sententias.—Sermones varii.—Quaestiones disputatae. Quaedam in Philosophia.

[2] In his Book, de script. eccles. c. 854. p. 203. *Trithemius* speaks of him under the name *Angelus* Saxo de *Brunsvico*—in the work de script. Germ. c. 219 under the name Magister *Engelinus*. In the first passage he predicates of him: ingenio acer, vita praeclarus, in declamandis sermonibus ad populum celeberrimae opinionis. His writings: In Canonem missae.—Sermones varii.—Quaestiones diversae.—Quaedam alia.

far as the Elbe. We have already become acquainted with Erfurt as a centre of scientific, and especially of theological, life, for the North of Germany. Leipsic and Wittemberg became its associates at the commencement, in the one case, of the 15th, and in the other, of the 16th century. In the South, however, we find at the same period a much greater number of such luminous points, in its universities, residences, and industrial free cities. In particular, the great Spiritual territories stretched along the banks of the Rhine. This country, as designated by the popular wit, was the priest-gait of the German empire. Here the clemency of the government of the crozier, as well as its oppression, might be experienced more largely than elsewhere. Among the great Prince-bishops, several were not only highly accomplished scholars, but also patrons of science and art. Their territories were especially rich in monasteries, and of these, there were always some which shone as nurseries of erudition, and harboured within their silent enclosures men who, as theologians, preachers, and patterns of a devout and godly life, spread a blessing around them. The true pith, however, of life and progress, was no longer, as in the earlier mediaeval period, to be found exclusively in the circle of the clergy and the monks. Education became more and more a common good, and secured for itself a far wider basis among the nobility, the higher class of citizens, and the vast multitude of scholars and artists, whose connection with the Church was feebler than in former years. The localities, however, in the great valley of the Rhine,[1] which claim special attention, as scenes of ecclesiastical and civil life, of science and of art, are the following. In *Constance* and *Basle*, the great reforming councils were held, and certainly not without influencing the sentiments of these districts and towns, especially *Basle*, which from 1460 possessed a flourishing university. Next in rank came *Friburg*, which was adorned with a university about the same date. *Strasburg* was a very ancient theatre of ecclesiastical and scientific life, of German citizenship, and artistic taste. In its vicinity, the 15th century witnessed the rise of *Schlettstadt*, the seat of the celebrated school of L. Dringenberg; and of

[1] Comp. an older treatise in Hagen, Deutschlands liter. und relig. Verhältnisse im Reform. Zeitalter. 1841. B. i. s. 197 sqq.

Hagenau, the nurse of the newly invented art of printing. In the middle district of the Rhine *Speyer*, *Worms*, and *Mayence* flourished as ancient and famous towns,[1] in which the aspiring spirit of citizenship emulated the power of the Prince-bishops, conflicted with every obstacle, and kindled animation upon every side. Close at hand, and to the east of the Rhine, stood the town of *Heidelberg*, the abode of princes, distinguished both for bravery and love of science, and adorned (since 1386) with a university which, at its very outset, had struck out a fresh course both in theology and philosophy congenial with the opposition. Somewhat further down on the other side of the river, we meet the Episcopal city of *Treves*, which, with its environs, are of the highest interest in an ecclesiastical point of view; and in fine, at the opening where the Rhine flows into the plain, old *Cologne*, boasting an ecclesiastical importance so great as to have been called in the middle ages the "Holy City," distinguished in many respects as the seat of an Archbishopric, and the nurse of art and science, and although belonging rather to the past, still, by means of its monuments, shedding a powerful and quickening influence over the present.[2]

At all these places, near the close of the 14th and in the course of the 15th century, we find men figuring prominently in Theology and ecclesiastical affairs. *John of Tritheim*,[3] the celebrated Abbot of Sponheim, who was himself one of them, mentions, in his work on ecclesiastical authors,[4] a very considerable number of learned divines and preachers, who about this time adorned the cities and monasteries from Strasburg to Cologne. We shall select for mention a few of those who flourished in the localities

[1] *Aeneas Sylvius* gives a beautiful description of these lovely towns on the Rhine in his remarkable work, De ritu, situ, moribus et conditione Germaniae. Bzovii Annal. eccles. T. xvii. p. 194.

[2] Of *Cologne e.g. Aeneas Sylvius* says in the afore-mentioned description, Quid ea *Colonia?* Nihil illa magnificentius, nihil ornatius tota Europa reperias. Templis, aedibus insignis, populo nobilis, opibus clara, plumbo tecta, praetoriis ornata, turribus munita, flumine Rheno et lætis circum agris lasciviens.

[3] Born 1462, died 1516.

[4] De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis, one of the continuations of the work of *Jerome* de viris illustribus, written in the year 1494, and dedicated to the noble *John of Dalberg*. Edition in Fabricii Bibliotheca eccles. Hamb. 1718.

around the scene of *Wesel's* labours. In *Speyer* we find the Augustinian monk *Peter of Spira*, well versed in Scripture and Philosophy, and enjoying extensive celebrity as a preacher.[1] In *Heidelberg*, *Marsilius of Inghen* († 1394), the first professor of Theology in the University, had had the following eminent successors: *John Plath*, a theologian and dogmatic author, thoroughly trained in the study of Scripture and the Aristotelian philosophy, who rose to celebrity about the year 1430, and is designated by Trithemius,[2] an ornament and pillar of the University; *John Dieppurg*, or, as he is otherwise called, John of *Frankfort*, likewise a scientific theologian, an acute controversialist, and an eminent preacher. As chaplain and secretary to Count Palatine Louis, he was employed in difficult civil transactions and embassies, was the author of various doctrinal, controversial, and ascetic writings and political discourses, and likewise flourished about the year 1430;[3] *Henry of Gouda*, probably in his day the most eminent of the professors of Heidelberg. He was skilled in Scripture and Philosophy, known for many doctrinal and ascetic works, and enjoyed great distinction about the year 1435.[4] *John Ernesti*, familiar with Scripture and ancient literature, acute, eloquent, and the author of several doctrinal and ascetic works laboured about 1440;[5] *Stephen Hoest* from Ladenburg, a canon at Speyer and for a while court-chaplain at Heidelberg, learned in Scripture and profane science, celebrated as a philosopher and orator, the author of a commentary upon ethics and of a collection of sermons († 1471);[6] *Nicolaus von Wachenheim*, a philosophic divine, and one of the most influential of the Heidelberg professors in the second half of the 15th century († 1487), but an opponent of all free movement, a character in which we shall become better acquainted with him in the sequel;[7] and finally *Jodocus Eichenmann*, usually

[1] *Trithem.* de script. eccles. cap. 714. p. 165. ed. Fabric.
[2] De script. eccl. c. 763. p. 178.
[3] Ibid. cap. 764. p. 178.
[4] Ibid. cap. 775. p. 181.
[5] Ibid. cap. 798. p. 186.
[6] Ibid. cap. 833. p. 199. Other persons, devoted more to the secular sciences and civic industry who then lived in Heidelberg, are mentioned in *Kremer's* history of Frederick the victorious.
[7] *Trithem.* de script. eccles. cap. 864. p. 206.

called Jodocus of *Calw* from his birthplace. He was a professor, and for a time, according to the custom of the age, united to this office that of preacher in the Church of the Holy Spirit. Tolerably acquainted with the scholastic philosophy, but especially by long practice familiar with Scripture,[1] he was a man of a somewhat keen temperament, acted a prominent part in the 8th decennium of the 15th century, and will also be found present at the trial of *Wesel* for heresy at Mayence. From the district on the west of the Rhine downwards, we find in Trithemius notices of the following persons: *Conrad of Altzei*,[2] known in the second half of the 14th century, well grounded in theology and the sciences, of wide celebrity among his contemporaries, as a philosophic poet and mathematician, liberal in his views, eloquent in prose and verse, and author of a poetical work commendatory of the Virgin Mary and the redemption of the world; *John Fust of Kreutznach*,[3] was towards the end of the 14th century prior at Strasburg, and reader in a Carmelite monastery in his native town. He exercised a great influence by his sermons, of which several collections survived himself; *Nicolaus of Kreutznach*[4] lived about a century later, and was distinguished as a professor of theology at Vienna; *John Gauwer*,[5] a Carmelite, was a reader of Sacred Scripture at Mayence, eminent as a preacher and as the author of several doctrinal, exegetical, and ascetic works, and flourished about 1440; *Conrad of Rodenburg*,[6] abbot of the monastery of *Johannisberg* in the Rheingau, was a Benedictine monk, of great learning and piety, austere in his habits, and the author of several ascetical works († 1486); *Henry of Andernach*,[7] a Carmelite, was celebrated as a preacher and theological author about the end of the 14th century; *Rheinhard of Fronthoven*, Henry *Kaltysen*, a

[1] *Tritheim* describes him as ingenio promptus et vehemens, qui in Gymnasio Heidelbergensi legendo, docendo et praedicando multis annis in pretio fuit. He states his works to be: De diversis Sermones varii Lib. i.—Vocabularius praedicantium Lib. i. et varii Tractatus. De Scriptor. eccl. c. 873. p. 208.

[2] *Trithem.* de script. eccles. c. 660. p. 155.

[3] Ibid. c. 665. p. 154.

[4] Ibid. c. 874. p. 208.

[5] Ibid. c. 793. p. 185.

[6] Ibid. c. 860. p. 205.

[7] Ibid. c. 688. p. 161.

Dominican, and Tilmann of *Hachenberg*, a Minorite, were all three[1] greatly beloved as preachers in their several monasteries at *Coblentz*, the two first at the beginning, and the third at the end of the 15th century. Finally, *John Rode*[2] was a native of Treves, thoroughly educated at the University of Heidelberg in theology and the canon law. He was abbot of a Benedictine monastery in his native city, and as a strict and rigid monk was of great use in the reformation of the monasteries set on foot by the Council of Basle. It is true that only a few of these men joined the new and liberal tendencies, which in the course of the 15th century were more and more powerfully developed. The majority of them merely propagated the received opinions in theology, and the old ecclesiastical routine. The very number of these, however, which relatively is not small, is a proof that a considerable activity in the branches of study we have specified, reigned in the district, and that the soil was sufficiently prepared for the reception of fresh seed.

Directing our view to *Worms* itself, a place so famous in the traditions and history of Germany, and which then stood greatly higher in the scale of prosperity than is the case in modern times, it is well known that the ancient city of the Vangions was one of the earliest seats of Christianity in Germany. It probably possessed a bishop about the middle of the 4th century.[3] Towards the end of the 6th, St Rupert took his departure from it to convert Bavaria.[4] In the reign of Charlemagne, Erembert was celebrated as its bishop, and from his day to the present, the catalogue of his successors is tolerably entire.[5] Till the 11th century the citizens of Worms had lived in peace and obedience under the crozier. In the reign of Adelbert (1068—1107) they became embroiled with their Bishop. Endowed with peculiar privileges by Henry IV., and several of his successors—as, for example, Charles IV. and Wenzel,—this city endeavoured more

[1] About them see *Trithem.* c. 715. p. 165. c. 808. p. 189, c. 700. p. 163.

[2] Ibid. c. 806. p. 188.

[3] *Hefele* Geschicte der Einführung des Christenthums im südwestlichen Deutschland. Tüb. 1837. s. 187.

[4] *Hefele*, s. 191.

[5] *Schannat* Historia Episcopatus Wormatiensis. Francof. ad Moen. MDCCXXXIV. T. i. p. 310 sqq.

and more to cast off the Episcopal government.[1] Within the walls of Worms, the same conflict arose which is also witnessed in Speyer, Cologne, and other episcopal seats, between the old and privileged hierarchy and the class of citizens now inflamed with youthful ambition and the thirst of freedom. This state of things lasted, with occasional fluctuations, during the whole of the 15th century, at the close of which it became so violent that *John of Dalberg*,[2] the most distinguished of all the bishops of Worms, was forced to live almost the whole period of his incumbency away from his capital. At the beginning of the 15th century, we find the episcopal chair occupied by *Echard of Ders* (1370—1405). He was a lover of peace, and yet even under him the magistrates and citizens endeavoured in every way to restrict the spiritual jurisdiction and ancient rights of the Bishop.[3] The prime subject of dispute was a claim urged by the clergy to have the wine, on which their income mainly depended, delivered to them free of duty, and according to the old measure. This the citizens, in spite of an admonition by the Emperor, peremptorily refused, and ere long carried matters still farther, by calling in question other privileges of the clergy, insisting upon their taking a civic oath, and threatening to expel them from the city. As the dispute swelled at last to violence and tumult, the Bishop laid the city under interdict,[4] and the Imperial court ordered the reinstatement of the clergy who had been banished or forced to fly, and imposed upon the place a fine of 100,000 gold marks. The storm now burst forth in full fury. On the 1st of March 1386 the citizens rose in arms against the clergy, inflicted various outrages upon them, and cast thirty-eight prelates into prison. The excommunication of the Pope and the ban of the Emperor both menaced the city, when the Count Palatine, Rupert the younger, interposed and mediated a peace between the contending parties, which lasted for six years. Even yet, however, perfect concord was far from being established, and Echard, weary of the struggle, withdrew from Worms to Neuhausen, where he died, upon the

[1] *Schannat* T. i. p. 342 sqq.
[2] *Schannat* T. i. p. 417—422. *Ullmann* Memoria Dalburgii p. 7.
[3] *Schannat* T. i. p. 401—406.
[4] . . . . toti civitati sacris interdixit.

14th May, 1405. He was succeeded by a person, remarkable not only among the bishops of Worms, but among the learned and liberal-minded men of the age, *Matthew of Cracau*, or *Cracow* (r. 1405—1410).[1] Descended from a noble family, eminent as a theologian, and of great experience in the management of business, Matthew, by favour of King Rupert, whose chancellor he was,[2] and supported by Pope Innocent VII., was enabled to take a firmer stand. The citizens were compelled to submit, and through the mediation of Rupert and John of Nassau, Archbishop of Mayence, an agreement was entered into substantially favourable to the Bishop. In 1409 Matthew attended the Council at Pisa, where, agreeably to the wish of Rupert, he strove, but without success, to resist the deposition of Gregory XII. He departed this life in the following year. The epitaph upon his tomb in the choir of the dome calls him a distinguished Doctor of Theology, and in this character we shall make his acquaintance in the sequel. It appears likewise to have been in his day, or that of his predecessor, that another man of learning and high celerity for his free opinions in Theology, Master *Henry of Langenstein*, usually called *Henry of Hesse* († 1428) was canon in Worms.[3] And about the same time, *Philip*,[4] abbot of the Cistercian monastery of Otterberg, in the diocese, was highly extolled as a Scriptural Divine, a philosopher, and a devotional author.

In consequence of the state of both the Empire and the Church, great disturbances took place under the Bishop who succeeded Matthew of Cracow. *John II. of Fleckenstein*[5] (1410—26) lived in almost continual broils, and at the close of a life of conflict retired to Ladenburg. *Eberhard III. of Sternberg*, after a reign of eight months, voluntarily withdrew from the difficulties of the

[1] *Schannat* T. i. p. 407—408.

[2] *Matthew of Cracow*, and *Conrad of Saltow*, Bishop of Werden, were influential advisers of Ruprecht. Joh. Georg. *Eccardi* Corp. histor. med. æv. T. i. p. 2125.

[3] *Trith.* de script. eccl. c. 684, p. 159 sqq. Hunc, quemadmodum ex quadam ejus Epistola reperi, Canonicum Wormaciensis ecclesiae fuisse crediderim.

[4] *Trithem.* c. 697. p. 162.

[5] *Schannat* T. i. p. 409—411.

situation.[1] *Frederick II. of Dunneck* (1427—45)[2] deemed it best to relinquish many privileges which it was difficult to assert, and occupied himself with all the greater zeal, and in the spirit of the Council of Basle, with the reformation of the clergy and the monastic institutions. *Louis of Ast*,[3] whose election had been contested, resigned the office after a reign of forty days. He was succeeded by a man who once more took the field with energy, and whose episcopal administration claims our attention, as having been coincident with the period of *Wesel's* residence at Worms. We speak of *Reinhard I. of Sickingen* (r. 1445—82).[4] After receiving solemn consecration at the hands of Archbishop Dietrich of Mayence, upon the Ehrenfels, Reinhard made a pompous procession into the city. Endowed with great strength of will, and considerable talents, proud of his ancient and noble extraction, and little disposed to make concessions, he struck out for himself a path very different from that of his immediate predecessors, and strove with all his might to maintain the ancient prerogative, of his see. The method he adopted is well illustrated by the following incident. It was the old custom of the magistrates of Worms, when they had a malefactor to hang, to petition the bishop for the halter. This obligation involved an acknowledgment of his jurisdiction, and seemed to be humiliating, and therefore, in order to evade it, they caused chains to be fastened permanently to the gallows. The indignant Bishop immediately summoned the Provost and Council into his presence, and admonished them to abstain in future from all such innovations, adding that "neither he nor yet his bishopric were so impoverished as not to possess plenty of ropes to hang even rebellious magistrates, if necessary." At the same time, *Reinhard of Sickingen* was full of zeal for the public good. At the diet of Nuremburg in 1456 he advocated with all his might a war against the Turks. In the dispute between Dietrich of Isenburg and Adolph of Nassau, as well as in that between Frederick the Victorious and his neighbours, he occupied a neutral position, anxious only to avert all injury from his subjects. In 1464, at the decease of Hesso count of Leiningen, the last of his family, being

[1] *Schannat* p. 142—414. Ibid. T. i. p. 412.

[3] Ibid. T. i. p. 414.

[4] Ibid. T. i. p. 415—417.

doubtful of his ability to assert with arms his right to the territory which was a feu of the Church of Worms, he applied for aid to his powerful neighbour, Frederick the Victorious, with whom he stood on the best footing, and whose councillor he was,[1] promising him a half of the possessions, which were all, however, to continue feudatory to the Bishopric. *Reinhard of Sickingen* also applied himself with great zeal and vigour to the improvement of the morals of the clergy and monks. Among others, he reformed the monasteries of Lobenfeld, Neuburg, and Liebenau. When that at Frankenthal, belonging to the canons of St Augustine, opposed his measures, he transferred it to the members of the College of Windesem,[2] who were eminent for their piety, and extended his reformatory zeal even to the Nuns of the rich Franciscan Convent at Worms.[3] But with all his love of improvement in this way, he cared for it only when strictly confined within the Church's limits. The moment it crossed these he encountered it with a no less vigorous hostility.[4] Hence we find him a decided opponent of *Wesel*, and delivering him into the hands of the Inquisition.

Such were the circumstances under which *John of Wesel* lived and laboured at Worms. The Church as a whole was in a state of evolution and movement, fermentation, and conflict, and so was the particular place to which *Wesel* was translated. He had to play his part upon a scene of great and often violent struggles for liberty on the part of the citizens, of jarring elements, of opposition to the clergy, and love of innovation. He himself was decidedly attached to the new views which were daily being developed with increasing vigour. As a learned theologian and an able preacher, he was conscious of his superiority to the clergy in the district both immediate and remote, and he did not shrink

[1] *Cremer's* Geschichte Kurfurst Frederichs I. Mannh. 1766. Th. 1. s. 393 and 625 sqq.

[2] See this singular document which breathes a fine and pious spirit, in *Schannat* T. ii. p. 244. Prob. 267.

[3] Ibid. p. 245. Prob. 268.

[4] *Schannat* T. i. p. 416: Demum in mores ac doctrinam *Joannis de Wesalia*, concionatoris famigeratissimi, altius investigans, quod is tum scripto tum viva voce quaedam sparsisset in vulgus, quae ex Hussitorum sentina videbantur deprompta, ipsum Moguntiae in manus Inquisitorum tradidit.

from giving the freest expression to his sentiments. Indeed, although not destitute of modesty, still in the enunciation of what seemed to him to be sacred truth and to pertain to life's highest interests, and in the denial of what he considered falsehood, pretence, and deceit, he may more justly be charged with having been reckless and offensive than with any excess of prudence, hesitation, and timidity. Let us see in what light he regarded his task, and in what manner he endeavoured to execute it.

Wesel was not blind to the *difficulties* which, in his age and circumstances, were opposed to a faithful preacher of the Gospel. He clearly saw and deeply deplored the corrupt state of the Church, and boldly stated what he thought upon the subject. "The Church," he says in a treatise written during his residence at Worms,[1] "has lapsed so far from true piety into a certain kind of Jewish superstition, that wherever we turn our eyes we see nothing but an empty and ostentatious display of works, void of the least spark of faith, the Pharisaic pride of the Rabbis, cold ceremonies, and vain superstition, not to call it idolatry. All seem intent on reaping a golden harvest, pursue only their own interest, and totally neglect the duties of Christian piety." He was also aware how few there were in high stations who did their part in vigorously counteracting the prevailing corruption. "It is certainly," he says,[1] "a hard task to be one of the princes and rulers of the people, for they have to answer not merely for their own sins, but also for the errors of others, and if men would reflect upon this, they would never canvas for the office of a ruler and pastor, nor pursue, or purchase it with gold, but would wait the call of the Lord; for they who obtain this dignity without vocation are, according to the language of our Saviour, thieves and robbers, having entered in by another way and not by the door of Christ. The preachers of eternal wisdom ought to be the salt of the earth. 'But if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is henceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men.' The meaning of which is, if the doctrine of the priests and prelates be not the genuine doctrine of Christ, it ought to be rejected and

[1] De auctoritate, officio et potestate Pastorum ecclesiasticorum *Walch* Monim. med. aev. vol. ii. fasc. 2. p. 142—143.

[2] Ibid. p. 136 and 137

trampled in the dust, so little is it our duty to listen to pastors, who would fain besprinkle and season us with salt that has lost its virtue. Rare as a black swan is the priest who discharges the apostolical office with apostolical fidelity. And the reason is, because the Word of the Lord is fettered by human devices and cannot be freely preached. Tyranny and oppression on every side cry out against it, and the ordinances of many bishops are opposed; not to speak of the legends of the saints, the imposture of indulgences, the labours of fraternities, which one must in every way extol to the skies, in order to enjoy favour, and escape the chance of losing one's stipulated pay.[1] 'Speak to us what we like to hear,' say the people in their folly, 'or we will call down the wrath of God upon your head.' The consequence is, that (as good pastors either hide in a corner, or are proscribed and shamefully banished), the great majority discharge their office with no other view but to feed themselves and not the sheep, and seek to promote their own interests instead of nourishing them. Nay sometimes not satisfied with their wool and milk, they flay and wholly devour them. How extreme the misery of the Christian flock! The little ones call for bread and there is no one to give it them. They seek for water and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst."

He did not, however, permit this state of things to dim his mental vision. The less he was satisfied with realities, the more did *the image of the truly apostolical man and preacher* rise bright and majestic before his soul; the more he felt repelled by the present, the more did he hopefully and aspiringly cast his eyes into the future. "The object of the office of prince and pastor," he says,[2] probably in allusion to his immediate vicinity, and in particular to Bishop *Reinhard of Sickingen*, "is not to outshine others by the splendour and wealth in which he lives, not to go about in royal state, not to surpass great satraps in the number of their satellites, not to play the Sybarite in idleness and luxury, and labour to regain lost power;[3] but with his whole heart to

[1] This refers especially to the situation of *Wesel* in Worms. See in the sequel *Wesel's* letter to Bishop *Reinhard of Sickingen.*

[2] Ibid. p. 138—140.

[3] The last words are particularly suited to Bishop *Sickingen*, whose endeavours in one direction aimed at the restoration of the Episcopal authority.

execrate and contemn these things, and, on the contrary, to do good to all committed to his charge, or connected with him in the bond of charity, by exhortation and counsel, instruction, consolation, and help. For it is the duty of a Christian man to exercise not power, but love, over those whom he governs, measuring all with one line, viz., the communion of faith and the confession of Christian charity. In this religion there is no difference, the righteousness of God which is by faith in Jesus Christ being in all and upon all who believe. They have made thee a prince, saith the Scripture, therefore exalt not thyself but be as one of them.[1] Yea, the Lord commands, Whoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. "The ruler," says Jerome, "ought, by his humility, to be the companion of them that do well, and by his zeal for justice, to stand boldly up against the sins of the wicked, yet so as never to prefer himself to the good." The first qualification, including all others, which *Wesel* requires in him who preaches the Gospel, whether pastor or bishop, is *complete dedication* to his office and his Church. He ought to delight,[2] not in being superior to others, but in doing them good.[3] "As Christ," he says with deep emotion, "gives himself wholly to me, so am I bound, in my turn, to give myself wholly for the good of the brethren, and as he became our Saviour, so ought we also to strive to be saviours of others."[4] And this helpful sympathy ought, in his opinion, to be directed no less to their spiritual than their temporal good, and more especially, according to the pattern of Jesus and the Apostles, to the care and succour of the poor.[5] Even more important, however, in *Wesel's* eye is the radical and objective requirement which he sets before every other, that the preacher shall deliver uncurtailed and unalloyed the *pure Gospel* as it is *contained in the Word of God.* "The Redeemer," he says,[6] "promises the glory of the apostolic name to those who shall abide in his word. He whom God hath sent must preach God's

[1] In this passage also the admonition appears addressed to the then Bishop of *Worms*.

[2] . . . . . non *prae*esse hominibus, sed *pro*desse.

[3] Ibid. p. 139.

[4] Ibid. p. 148.

[5] Ibid. p. 141.

[6] Ibid. p. 122.

word; whereas he, whose discourse does not agree with the word of the Father, is excluded from his discipline. . . . It is clear[1] that he only who teaches the word of the Lord is a true apostle and pastor. Whosoever delivers a contrary doctrine is not to be believed. The *kernel of the Gospel*, however, was, according to *Wesel*, not the moral law, nor a righteousness by works arising from it, but *Christ* and *Christ's righteousness*, and emanating from these, a life of love and of free and spontaneous obedience to the law. "Whoever," he says,[2] "teaches that Christ has been made unto us for righteousness, the same is a teacher whom the Lord has given." Still more characteristic, however, is the following passage, "As the law is not given to the righteous, but to the unrighteous and unbelieving, every one has, in the Holy Spirit, a leader who is above the law. For there is no other fulfilling of the law, but the shedding abroad of the love of God in the heart. He who has obtained this has become one Spirit with God, and can say with the Apostle, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. . . . Whoever does the work of the law, even as respects its moral requirements, only in consequence of the law's constraint, keeps it in a mere carnal way, and does not really satisfy its demands, but whoever, from the spirit of faith, and with a willing mind, executes the law's work, even as respects outward things, for him alone is the law truly spiritual. This genuine fulfilment of the law is the gift of that Spirit who quickens the ungodly, and by whom every pious man is certainly actuated.

In this manner *Wesel* not only took his stand upon the Word of God, but what is more, in opposition to his age, in which the legal principle of the mediaeval period still bore the sway, he had penetrated to the centre of Christianity, to the very essence of the Gospel, to the righteousness, spirit, and life of Christ, in short, to that Saviour who, to all who embrace him by living faith, becomes a source of peace, love, and true morality. He recognized the love, which is the offspring of faith, as the sole true fulfilling of the law; and this knowledge, embraced with his whole soul, gave him confidence and alacrity, both to labour

[1] Ibid. p. 123.
[2] Ibid. p. 124.
[3] Ibid. p. 150—152.

undauntedly amid the difficulties of the present, and hopefully and joyfully to anticipate the future. He knew that the word of God was not held in great esteem, and that it could scarcely be preached except at the risk of life. Against this, however, he sought to steel his mind. He says:[2] "The language of our Rabbis is like that of the Jews in the days of the Saviour, 'Thou wast altogether born in sin and wilt thou teach us;' Good God! how odious and intolerable to these proud and inflated Moabites is a preacher of Christ! Their cry is—

'Dii nostris istas terris avertite pestes.'

If, however, thou art enjoined to teach evangelical and Christian piety, than which nothing is so greatly disrelished, then suffer not yourselves to be frightened and discouraged by the Papal fulminations, curses, and interdicts. From bulls (made of paper and of lead) they dart but a harmless flash. The excommunicator was himself under excommunication by the Divine Judge, before he uttered his sentence, and with a curse upon his own head, he has no power to excommunicate others. There is, therefore, much greater cause to fear the curse, which says, 'Woe unto you who call evil good, and good evil,' than that which human tyranny presumes to utter." Full of courage like this, *Wesel* did not shrink from the undisguised declaration of his evangelical sentiments, even at the risk of occasionally giving offence. No doubt he had learned from the great Apostle of the Gentiles to be subject even to human ordinances, when these seemed conducive to edification in the faith, and calculated to promote love. He deemed it a Christian duty, as far as it was practicable without compromising truth, to abstain from wounding the brethren; but where truth was at stake, he cared for no one. "When we are placed in such straits," he says,[3] "that we must choose between disobeying a superior, upon the one hand, and thereby causing a scandal, and injuring truth upon the other, it is much better that our neighbour should

[1] Ibid. p. 149: quod verbum domini humilibus ludibrio sit et probro, ut non liceat libere, *nisi capitis paratus sis adire pericula*, praedicare.

[2] Ibid. p. 149 and 150.

[3] Ibid. p. 141.

suffer, for to him we may possibly make compensation, than that truth should be injured which it is impious to do." This confidence in the Divine word enabled him to look with assurance to the future. Like *Jacob of Jüterbock*, his cotemporary and a man of congenial sentiments, when burdened with the painful experiences of the present, he stands erect, but with greater vigour, and, without giving way to distracting conjectures, takes a firmer hold of the future, and anticipates the approach of *the hero who was to deliver them*. "Come it will," he says, in a short but very remarkable passage,[1] "Our souls will perish with hunger, unless from on high some star of mercy rise, and dispel the darkness, and clear our eyes from the delusions with which they are bewitched by the falsehood of our rulers, and restore the light, and, at last, after so many years, break the yoke of our Babylonish captivity, by either guiding these workers of iniquity, these slowbellies, these dogs and evil beasts, these gluttons, and devourers of widows' houses, to the eternal truth, or if not, by plunging them into hell, lest we all go down together into the same pit. Deliver, O God, thy people from all their tribulations."[2]

Such are the principles laid down for the guidance of his ministerial labours, such the spirit in which he worked. *The matter of his sermons*, or at least the leading topics, are known to us from a collection of his peculiar opinions, which bears the title of "*The Paradoxes of Dr John Wesel*,"[3] and was compiled chiefly from his discourses. Some particulars upon the subject may also be gleaned

[1] Ibid. p. 129.

[2] In the sequel, p. 153, *Wesel* speaks to the same effect, "Thou hast," he addresses God, "set men over us, who load us with burdens grievous to be borne, and which they themselves will not touch with one of their little fingers. Hear at last our cry, save us from the burden which weighs us down, break the yoke that oppresses us. Hear the sighs of the prisoners, and loose the fetters of them that are destroyed."

[3] *Paradoxa D. Joannis de Wesalia*, quae feruntur a quibusdam Thomistis ex illius concionatoris ore fuisse excepta—first printed inter varia scripta ad calcem Commentariorum de rebus gestis in Concilio Basil. ab Aenea Sylvio conscriptorum adjecta, sine anno et loco—then in *Ortuini Gratii* Fasciculus rerum expetendarum et fugiendarum, edit. i. fol. 163. edit. ii. T. i. p. 325; lastly, in D'Argentré Collectio judiciorum de novis erroribus. Paris. 1728. T. i. p. ii. p. 291. 292. The last imprint is here used.

from his trial before the court of Inquisition. In this way, we likewise obtain a view of *Wesel's Theological convictions*, so far as they have not been stated in the fore-mentioned treatise against Indulgences.

As in the case of all the great men connected with the Reformation, we can distinguish in the *views of Wesel* two fundamental elements: 1st, Reverence for the whole *Bible;* and 2dly, special reverence for the Epistles of *Paul*—the latter somewhat tinged by the works of *Augustine*. He sets out with referring all things to Scripture, and then proceeds to deduce them more specifically from the idea of the Divine grace, as in every case decisive. Every thing in the doctrine or practice of the Church, which seems to conflict with either of these criteria, he rejects. Hence nothing has any worth in his eyes which has not been ordained by Christ, and all is baneful that bears the character of righteousness by works. It is true that his statements have been reported to us only in a brief and fragmentary way, and probably are here and there likewise disfigured. Neither is their connexion with the whole system of his views always perceptible. From the two fundamental principles, which we have specified, however, it is possible to derive them with tolerable fulness.

Scripture, according to *Wesel*, is, in the first place, the only sufficient guarantee for unity of faith. "Seldom," says he, "do I find that any two learned men agree in faith. No one coincides in opinion with me, if we take away the Gospel. In it, however, we are all at one."[1] For this reason it was his great desire that all should hold fast by Scripture, and by that alone.[2] Christ enjoined upon His disciples nothing but to preach the Gospel, and therefore they were neither entitled nor qualified to make new laws. All they had to do was to guide believers to the observance of the Gospel.[3] Still less have the clergy of after times, the prelates, any such authority, and hence it is no sin to transgress the ecclesiastical ordinances which they have issued.[4] If

[1] Paradoxa p. 291, b.

[2] In the Examen magistrale s. 296, it is said of *Wesel:* Item credit, quod nihil sit credendum, quod non habeatur in Canone Bibliae.

[3] Parad. 291, a.

[4] Ibid 291, b.

Scripture, however, is to hold sway as the only law of Christian life, all depends upon its *interpretation*, and here *Wesel* believes neither in the Glosse[1] nor in the writings of any teacher, however holy and highly esteemed he may be. He is afraid "of the Doctors giving a wrong, deceptive, and false interpretation.[2] He would prefer having the Bible explained solely by itself. No authority of even the wisest and most learned Christian can here avail. For who among men would venture to determine the meaning which Christ put into his words, except himself? Cautious expositors, however, will compare passages together and explain the one by the other."[3] That, however, which *Wesel* finds to be fundamental in the teaching of Scripture is the *grace* of God. It is by the grace of God alone that all are saved who are ever saved at all.[4] They are destined to it from eternity. "From eternity God has inscribed all his elect in a book. In that book no name which is not there will ever be written. Neither will any name once written in it ever be blotted out."[5] In this matter, and to gain eternal salvation, the Pope, the bishops, and the priests can do nothing essential. All to which they look is concord and peace with men, and a quiet life. "He whom God is pleased of his grace to save will be saved, even though all the priests in the world were to condemn and curse him; but he whom God condemns, will be condemned, though Pope and priest were unanimously to pronounce him saved. Though there never had been a Pope,[6] all who really are saved would have been saved as well." Whether *Wesel* actually enunciated the doctrine of predestination in terms so hard we may leave undetermined. There can, however, be no question that he did his best to exalt the grace of God in its purity, and to exclude the works of men from being a ground of salvation.

From the position of firm adherence to Scripture and the doctrine of grace which he had thus assumed, *Wesel* was neces-

[1] Glossae non credit. Parad. 291, b.
[2] Pard. 291, b.
[3] Pard. 291, b., above.
[4] Sola Dei gratia salvantur Electi. Parad. 291, b.
[5] Ibid. 291, b.
[6] Si nullus unquam Papa fuisset, adhuc salvati fuissent hi, qui salvati sunt. Parad. 291, b.

sarily led into a determined opposition, not only to all the unscriptural additions which time had made to the primitive Church, but to every institution which seemed to restrict the acknowledgment of grace, or in any way to open the door for righteousness by works; and consequently to a great many things in the Church of his age. Even the notion of the Catholic Church, as a Church essentially holy, was to him a subject of doubt. In the creed he disapproved of the addition of the epithet Catholic to the words, "I believe in the Holy Church," as Jerome also did, and which was an after interpolation, "For," he said,[1] "the Catholic Church, understanding by that the whole body of baptized persons, so far from being holy, consists for the most part of reprobates."[2] And generally his opinion of the doctrines, institutions, and practices of the Church was, that the greater part of them were contrary alike to Scripture and to Grace. It is true that he devoted less of his attention to doctrines; but at the same time, he had great scruples upon the articles of transubstantiation and the procession of the Holy Spirit. As respects the first of these—anticipating in germ the doctrine of *Luther*—he expresses his opinion to the effect "that the body of Christ might exist under the form of the bread, though the substance of the bread remained."[3] With reference to the second, he is disposed to adopt the view held by the Eastern Church, to the effect, that the Holy Spirit proceeds only from the Father; at least he contends it is impossible to show from Scripture that he proceeds also from the Son.[4] In both instances, *Wesel's* views seem to flow from his strict Scriptural principles. He took much greater offence, however, at many of the Ecclesiastical institutions, which encroached upon the doctrine of free grace, and favoured that of holiness by works. His objection to indulgence we have already seen. But in other ways, he considered that Christendom was heavily burdened with merely human ordinances and customs.[5] "Christ," he said,

[1] Parad. 292, a.

[2] . . . major pars reprobata.

[3] Examen magistr. p. 294: Item credit, quod corpus Christi possit esse sub specie panis, *manente substantia panis*.

[4] Parad. 292, a: Scriptura sacra non dicit, Spiritum sanctum procedere a Filio. Comp. Exam. magistr. p. 296. 298.

[5] Sic gravata est Christianitas per humanas leges et constitutiones. Parad. p. 292.

"did not appoint fasts. He never forbade the use of diverse kinds of food, as, for instance, flesh upon particular days. Just as little did he ordain the celebration of stated festivals. He prescribed no set prayers, except the Paternoster, and still less did he enjoin priests to sing or read the Canonical psalms.[1] In these days, over all Christendom, the mass has been made a most burdensome service. St Peter went much more expeditiously to work, and simply consecrated the communion with the Lord's prayer. Now-a-days, on the contrary, the priest who celebrates must stand for an hour and more enduring the cold, which injures his health, and thus man destroys himself."[2] The same spirit in which *Wesel* combatted indulgences bred in his mind an indignant zeal against other kinds of penances and good works. He is further reported to have said,[3] "When a penitent confesses, he is subjected to a rigorous penance, such as a pilgrimage to Rome or some more distant place, abstinence from food, or the repetition of a multitude of prayers. Christ did nothing of the sort. He only said, 'Go and sin no more.' Pilgrims to Rome, however, are fools, for they might easily find and keep at home what they seek in a foreign land." *Wesel* even called in question, "whether it was the *Church* which had originally appointed Fasts, and in like manner whether it had forbidden marriage during Septuagesima."[4] All these things appeared to him to have crept in in after times, and in opposition to law.

The connexion of the things, of which we have hitherto spoken, with *Wesel's* turn of mind is very clear. We meet, however, with two other paradoxes which are more isolated, and yet at the same time not wholly foreign to his principles. In the first place, he is said to have affirmed,[5] "that in the petition 'Thy kingdom come,' we do not pray for the kingdom of heaven, because that kingdom does not come to us at all." Now, there are two different meanings which he may have intended to express by these words. He may have meant to say either that the kingdom of God should not be prayed for as something still future, inasmuch

[1] Parad. p. 291, b.
[2] Ibid. p. 292, a.
[3] Ibid. 292, a.
[4] Ibid. 292, a.
[5] "Adveniat regnum tuum;" ibi non petimus regna Coelorum, quia illud non venit ad nos. Parad. 291, b.

as it is already here, or that the kingdom of God, in the highest and fullest sense of the term, does not come to us on earth at all, its present manifestation being always mingled with elements of sin. In both cases, the words have a good meaning. The first is the way in which *Luther*[1] understood them; but the second harmonizes better with *Wesel's* leading views on the subject of the Church, inasmuch as he may have wished to intimate, that the Church visible, being commingled with sinners and reprobates, was not the true and perfect kingdom of God, a pure communion of saints. The second paradox relates to the exegetical question, which to this day continues a topic of much debate, viz., whether Christ at the crucifixion[2] was nailed to the cross, or merely bound to it with cords. *Wesel* admits that the narrative of the Evangelists contains no positive statement on the subject. Afterwards, however, at his trial, he expressed his readiness no longer to call in question the fact of the Saviour's having been nailed, as he had formerly done even in addressing the people.[3] This exegetical scruple, although not directly connected with his substantial views, would still be a proof of his having possessed a spirit of enquiry, independent of the traditional and current opinions. At the same time the scruple may have involved a doctrinal bearing (very different indeed from modern Rationalism), and been the offspring of his opposition to a common and coarse view adopted chiefly by the Schoolmen, posterior to the days of Thomas, respecting the value and consequence of the *quantity* of blood shed by Christ, as if on that its efficacy depended,—an interpretation strictly connected with the doctrine of supererogatory merits, and through that with Indulgences, which *Wesel* so zealously combatted.

Such *doctrinal matter*, in the existing condition of the Church, could not but give offence, and greatly more, no doubt, the manner in which *Wesel* delivered it to the people. The *style of*

[1] See in the sequel, 3d part, 2d chap.

[2] The *feet* are not expressly mentioned, but the question is put generally.

[3] Exam. Magistr. p. 295: Vicesimo quinto, an praedicaverit publice populo, dubium esse, an Christus fuisset funibus cruci alligatus, aut clavis affixus? Fatetur, se dixisse, quod non habeatur in Evangelio passionis, an clavis sit affixus, an funibus. Credit tamen, quod clavis.

his preaching was, in many respects, of distinguished excellence. He possessed intellect, fervour, and vivacity. His theological training raised him above the great majority of cotemporary preachers. The effects which he produced, and the celebrity which he attained, give us ground to conclude that even in this respect his gifts were considerable. But pure and irreproachable as a preacher he certainly was not. His boldness sometimes degenerated into arrogance, his popularity into pungent and provoking jests, such as, making all allowance for the rude spirit of the age, we cannot consider but as too strong for a man of otherwise so earnest a character. When combatting the exaggerated estimate which was formed of priestly rites, such as unction with consecrated oil, he would venture to say, "The consecrated oil is no better than that which is in daily use in your kitchens."[1] Or, when discoursing on fasting, he would observe, "If St Peter did introduce this practice, it could only have been to obtain a readier sale for his fish;"[2] or, "When it is said that the holy Church appointed fasts, and that at these seasons no one ought to take home a wife or celebrate a marriage: These are pure falsehoods;" or, "The fathers who instituted fasts, if they did mean to prohibit the use of certain kinds of food, certainly did not intend that a man should not eat when he was hungry. As long as he is hungry a man may lawfully eat, and there is no sin in even dining upon a fat capon on Good Friday."[3] He expressed himself from the pulpit with more moderation, but still strongly enough, against other ecclesiastical enactments, the authority of the Church in general, and the Pope. "What is not in Scripture called sin," he said, "I for one will not reckon sinful. If another man knows more and better, he is welcome to his opinion." And again, "I despise the Pope, the Church, and the Councils, and extol Christ. Let His word dwell in us richly." He used also to say, "It is now more difficult than ever to be a Christian."[4] These expressions of *Wesel* are reported to us by one of his admirers, and we have no reason to doubt

[1] Paradoxa, p. 291.
[2] In the same place.
[3] *Flacius* Catalog. Test. veritatis. Lib. xix. t. ii. p. 885.
[4] All these expressions occur in the passage above quoted from *Flacius*.

their authenticity. Others, as is evident, however, have been falsely laid to his charge, for example, when it was said that at Wiesbaden, or somewhere else, he had blasphemously declared that "He who sees the sacrament of the Mass sees the Devil."[1]

CHAPTER SECOND.

WESEL, AS A WRITER ON THE DEPRAVED MORALS OF THE CLERGY. MATTHEW OF CRACOW, A REFORMING BISHOP OF WORMS.

Wesel's reformatory efforts were not confined to his own congregation, or within the walls of Worms. He had learned to know and to contemplate the Church at large with too lively an interest not to attempt to influence its general circumstances. And of these, the *condition of the clergy* presented itself as the most important. In former times it could be said that all depended, as even now it may be said that much depends, upon them. At all times, no doubt, the demoralization of the clergy and that of the people are mutually connected and reciprocally influence each other, as is also the case with their amendment. It is said, with truth, of the fine arts, that they are either ruined or promoted by the artists, and we may apply the same remark to the relation between the clergy and the Church. To them, more than to any other cause, it is always owing whether the life of the Church is to sink or whether it is to ascend. Hence if at that time there was to be any amendment in the Church, it was necessary to direct strict attention to the clergy, and in the first place to their corruption. The fact that, with a few honourable exceptions, the whole body, from the head to the humblest member, were very greatly depraved, was one which no serious minded and observant man could conceal from himself. *Wesel* was among those who felt this with deep sorrow, and, being firmly convinced that it concerned the Church's very life, he devoted

[1] Examen magistrale, p. 294 and 295.

to the subject a special treatise, which, from the nature of the case, explains to us what his *opinions respecting the Church* really were. We have no doubt that the little work on "*The authority, duty, and power of the pastors of the Church*," belongs to this later period of his life, when he resided at Worms. It is written with greater zeal and boldness than the treatise against Indulgences, expresses more decidedly and urgently the need of a reformation, and thereby indicates that he had progressed in his reformatory tendency. It contains little more than the experiences and wishes which must have been forced upon his mind, in the course of his ecclesiastical and pastoral labours, and among these there is much which may quite naturally be considered, as an allusion to the particular circumstances under which he laboured in Worms. Before we proceed, however, to give an account of this work, we must advert to a very interesting parallel. A *Bishop of Worms*, whom in one aspect we may designate the precursor of *Wesel*, has written upon a kindred subject, the *Pollutions of the Roman Court;* and as both works in some measure supplement each other, the Bishop's treating what was wrong in the position of his episcopal brethren, and in their relation to the Pope, and expatiating in the higher regions, while the preacher's rather paints and assails the abuses which pervaded the whole clerical body, and produced the most baneful effects even among the people, it is certainly not out of place to take them here together, and in the order which appears natural, beginning with that of the dignitary, who is less known to posterity, and then passing to that of *Wesel* who, though a humble preacher, was yet from his connexion with the revolution of the 16th century, much more generally celebrated.

The Bishop of Worms to whom we allude is *Matthew of Cracow*.[1] Of this man, who died almost half a century before *Wesel* made his appearance in Worms, we have already had

[1] About him we may compare *Trithemius* de scriptor. eccles. c. 654. p. 153 and 154. ed Fabric. and de scriptor. German. c. 124. *Oudinus* commentar. de scriptor. eccles. T. iii. p. 1110 and 1111. *Schannat* Hist. Episcop. Wormat. T. i. p. 407. But especially *Walchii* Monim. med. aev. ii., 1. Praef. p. xii.—xxxviii. and the citations there.

occasion to speak; but as he was of some note, not merely as a prince-bishop, but as a theologian, and even, when judged by the standard of the age, as a reforming theologian, it is proper that we should treat of him somewhat more fully. *Matthew* was not, as many have been[1] misled by the designation de Cracovia to suppose, a native of Poland, but took the name of *Cracow*, as the descendant of a noble Pomeranian family.[2] We have no specific information respecting his parents or the date of his birth. It is highly probable that he pursued his studies at Prague and Paris.[3] Trithemius states[4] that at the time of the migration of the German students from Prague, and the disturbances with the Hussites, he was in the capital of Bohemia. This, however, is a mistake; for these events took place long after *Matthew* had left that city. All that we know is that, at an archiepiscopal synod which assembled there in the year 1384, he delivered a discourse on the improvement of the morals of the clergy and the people.[5] At both the Universities of Prague and Paris, he delivered lectures, and at the latter presided for a while over the theological faculty;[6] but which of the two he ultimately adorned as professor cannot be accurately determined. We are disposed to believe that it was Paris.[7] From that seminary, he was invited by the enlightened Elector and Emperor Rupert, as already an eminent preacher and teacher of theology, to the

[1] *e.g. Tritheim* de script. eccles c. 654. p. 153, also Conr. Gesner, Rob. Gerius, and others.

[2] A member of this family, *Frederick of Cracow*, was also, about the year 1430, provost of the Cathedral of Treves. *Schannat* Hist. Episc. Wormat. T. i. p. 408.

[3] *Oudinus* Comment. de script. eccl. T. iii. p. 1110.

[4] De scriptor. eccles. c. 654. p. 154. The assertion of *Trithemius* that Matthew was a master in Prague, seems nevertheless correct.

[5] *Pezius* Thesaur. anecdot. T. i. praefat. p. 6. *Walch* Monim i., 1. praef. p. 15.

[6] *Bouleaus* Hist. acad. Paris. T. iv. p. 975.

[7] The order in which most of the older authors place the Universities attended by *Matthew* is, first Prague, then Paris, and lastly Heidelberg; *Oudinus* puts Paris before Prague. It seems, however, more natural for *Matthew* to have attended first at Prague, and in consequence of the connexion in which the University of Heidelberg stood with that of Paris, in its foundation and during the first period of its existence, it is more likely that he would be summoned to Heidelberg from Paris, than from Prague.

newly founded University of Heidelberg.[1] His academical labours there, however, seem not to have been of great importance, or at least great duration.[2] Rupert, who entertained for him a high degree of personal attachment, soon transferred him to other spheres of usefulness and distinction. He became his chancellor, canon at Spiers, and in 1405, through Rupert's influence, Bishop of Worms.[3] In particular, the Emperor used his services as ambassador in the year 1403 to Boniface IX., in whose presence *Matthew* delivered two discourses, and again in 1406 to Gregory XII., on which occasion, as is said, but with no great probability, *Matthew* was made a cardinal,[4] and finally in 1049 to the Council at Pisa. Shortly after his return from this last mission, he departed this life 1410, in his episcopal city, and was buried in the Cathedral, where an epitaph still marks the place of his repose.[5] *Matthew of Cracow* conjoined with his lofty station qualities which secured to him personal weight. Endowed with a clear and sound mind, he had enjoyed the benefit of an excellent education in the schools of philosophy and theology.[6] In him a high reputation as an academical professor was combined with that of an admirable preacher, and although a strict, and as it even appears an ascetic, clergyman—for he was connected with the recently instituted order of St Birgitte[7]—he

[1] *Rupertus* ordinavit et fovit Heidelbergense studium, colligens undecumque doctores et magistros potiores, Magistrum *Matthaeum* de Cracovia sacrae theologiae professorem et praedicatorem eximium fecit episcopum Vormatiensem. Theod. *Engelhusii* Chronic. in Leibnitii scriptor. rer. Brunsvic. T. ii. p. 1136.

[2] Still he was in Heidelberg long enough, to hold at one time the office of Rector. The Hist. Univers. Heidelb. mscripta says of him s. 39 : Joanni Noyt in Rectoratu successit *Mattheus de Cracovia*, factus postmodum Episcopus Wormatiensis.

[3] *Schannat* Hist. Episc. Wormat. T. 1. p. 407, 408.

[4] *Walch* Monim. med. aev. ii., 1 praef. p. 17 sqq.

[5] *Schannat* Hist. Episc. Wormat. T. i. p. 408.

[6] *Trithemius* pourtrays him in the following words: Vir in divinis scripturis eruditus, secularis philosophiae non ignarus, ingenio promptus, eloquio scholasticus . . . magnam ab omnibus doctrinae suae laudem commeruit.

[7] *Oudinus* (Commentar de scriptor. eccles. T. iii. p. 1110) describes Matthew as Sanctae Brigittae familiaris. The expression familiaris might imply personal acquaintance; and as the Holy Brigitta († 1373) was still alive when Matthew had reached manhood, and Pommerania and Sweden are near, this might be inferred. Our

had no less in his travels and missions and by his intercourse with the great and the humble, collected a rich and extensive knowledge of mankind and experience of the world. In particular his situation as bishop, and his repeated missions to Italy on affairs of the highest importance, could not but make him familiarly acquainted with the Roman Court, and the whole hierarchy. The opinions he expresses upon these subjects have consequently a peculiar weight, and in that point of view, as the testimony of a prelate of high rank, and great knowledge of the world, and at the same time of distinguished seriousness and piety, they justly claim special consideration.

Among the numerous productions of his pen left behind him by *Matthew of Cracow*, but of which the most part are still lying unprinted in libraries, there is one which, on account of its singularity, has been repeatedly published, and which, in spite of the obscurity which involves its origin, corresponds so well with the circumstances of the time, with the situation of a German Bishop, and with what we know of the personal characteristics of *Matthew*, that we cannot but receive as correct the many and reliable documentary statements which point to him as its author.[1]

Matthew, as it seems, is once designated, *Matthias* de regno Sueciae *(Oudinus* l. l. p. 1111). The common meaning of familiaris, however, if the foundress of an order of sisters is alluded to, (*Du Cange* Glossar. med. et. inf. Latinit. T. ii. p. 398. s. v. Familiares) points only to connexion with that order. Familiares designates almost what the Jesuits in after times meant by the affiliated members of their order.

[1] *Trithemius*, *Schannat*, *Oudinus*, and *Walch*, treat of the *Writings* of *Matthew of Cracow*, the two last with special detail. *Trithemius* says (de script. eccl. c. 654): Scripsit multa praeclara opuscula, de quibus tamen pauca ad manus nostras pervenerunt. Vidi ejus ad Henricum Episcopum Wormiensis [Wormatiensis] Ecclesiae non abjiciendum opus de praedestinatione, et quod Deus omnia bene fecerit, cujus Dialogi interlocutores sunt pater et filius, quem praenotavit : Rationale divinorum operum Lib. vii. Besides this, *Trithemius* enumerates : De contractis L. i.—De celebratione missae L. i. Ad Episcopum Wormiens. L. i.—Epistolarum ad diversos L. i —Sermones et collationes.—*Schannat* (Hist. Ep. Worm. i. 408.) represents the Dialogus de praedestinatione and the Rationale divin. operum as two different writings, and supplements the catalogue of *Trithemius* with : Dialogus inter conscientiam et rationem. *Oudinus* (Comment de script. eccl. iii. 1110.) with still greater precision, designates this last writing as Conflictus rationis et conscientiae de sumendo vel abstinendo a corpore Christi, restores the title : de

Praedestinatione and Rationale divin. operum [also opificiorum] to a single treatise, and mentions besides: Sermo de peccatis alienis and Sermones latini per circuitum anni (probably included by the others under the general title of Sermones), also a work, Expositio in Apocalypsin, rendered doubtful by the designation of the author as *Matthias* de Regno Sueciae. It is most of all remarkable that *Oudinus*, who furnishes the fullest information respecting even the manuscripts of *Matthew of Cracow's* works, does not hesitate to cite as one of them the reformatory treatise *de Squaloribus curiae Romanae*, which Trithemius and Schannat omit, for reasons which it is easy to understand. The authenticity of this treatise is discussed in a very satisfactory manner in the preface to the Monim. med. aev. ii. 1. p. xxi.—xxxii. The chief points in the critical determination of the question are these. Two reasons appear to speak most strongly against its composition by *Matthew of Cracow:* 1. *Flacius* found it ascribed in a manuscript to another author, *Dr Lurtzen*, Catal. test. verit. Lib. xviii. t. ii. p. 801. 2. In the course of the work several things are mentioned which belong to a later period, as for example, the reigns of Popes John XXIII. and Martin V., the work of Peter D'Ailly de potestate ecclesiastica, and the fact of his being at the time a cardinal, which he did not become till 1411, with several other particulars. Respecting the first point, it must be remembered that *Flacius* found in other manuscripts the name of *Matthew of Cracow*, and that it is much less likely that his name should be without sufficient cause prefixed to a work, than that the same should be the case with the name of *Lurtzen*. The Bishop of Worms himself might have had quite sufficient reason to emit his work under a fictitious appellation, and even though that were not the case, others may have subsequently judged it expedient, for the interests of the Church or the conclave, to substitute for the bishop's a name that was wholly unknown. On the contrary, it is more difficult to understand how it could happen that, without any historical ground, the work was ascribed to *Matthew of Cracow*. It is also clear that during his sojourn at Paris, *Matthew* might easily have acquired the opinions which are here delivered. As for the anachronisms, which form the second point, they stand in contradiction to the very decided passage, cap. 18. p. 79, in which the author declares, in the most distinct manner, that he is writing in the period of the schism, and consequently before the Council of Pisa, or at least before that of Constance. We have therefore no option, save either to suppose, that the anachronisms originated in interpretations made afterwards about the time of the Council of Basle, to which copies of the work were sent, or that the passage, in which its composition is ascribed to the period of the schism, was a later and fraudulent addition. And here again the first alternative, which agrees with *Matthew of Cracow* being the author, is the more probable. There was no reason for antedating the tract, but there was good reason for appending to it at an after time any remarks which referred to then existing circumstances. Besides, in a manuscript at Wolfenbüttel, all the passages are wanting which infer a later production of the work, after the death of *Matthew*. (*Walch* l. s. p. xxvii.). We have to add the decisive diplomatic reason, that in a succession of ancient manuscripts (see *Oudinus* and *Walch*) the

The work treats of the *Pollutions of the Romish Court*,[1] and its contents are substantially as follows.

Moses beheld a miracle in the bush which burned and yet was not consumed. And even so does *Matthew*[2] *of Cracow* believe himself to be the spectator of a still greater miracle, when beholding the clerical body enveloped for a long time in flames, blown to violence by a strong wind, and yet continuing undestroyed. The one phenomenon seemed only contrary to nature, the other seems to him to be a violation of the Divine justice. So strange indeed does it appear to *Matthew*, that he had expected it would cause a general outcry and alarm, and yet he finds his cotemporaries unmoved and unconcerned. To convince himself that he is not dreaming, he proposes to relate the results of his observation to others.

In order to judge of the wrong condition of a thing,[3] says *Matthew*, we must compare it with the right and opposite one, and we especially require to know the root from which the goodness of it springs. The Apostolic chair and the Court of Rome are the root of the Church general. The Romish chair has received as its vocation to make laws, to dispense spiritual blessings, to correct the wicked, to reclaim wanderers, to punish vice, and to defend the oppressed. It is (according to its destination) the head and minister of all that is good, the pattern of morality, the model of virtuous conduct, and the quarter to which in all such matters the ultimate appeal is made. If, however, we observe the outward acts of the chair of Rome,[4] and infer from these what passes within, we cannot but mark that there is a complete neglect of all that is most needful for the Church. Rarely if ever is a conclave held to promote purely spiritual objects, or, if it be, it

name of the Bishop of Worms is affixed to it. For the rest, the work was ushered into light by the press, before the days of *Walch*, by Wolfg. *Wisseburg*, in connection with Petri de Alliaco Canonibus de emendatione ecclesiae Basil. 1551, and by Edw. *Brown* in the Appendix ad Ort. Gratii Fascic. rerum expetendarum et fugiendarum Lond. 1690. p. 584—607.

[1] Tractatus de squaloribus Romanae Curiae in *Walchii* Monim. med. aev. vol. ii. fasc. 1. p. 1—100.

[2] De squalorib. Rom. Cur. Introductio.

[3] De squalorib. c. 1.

[4] De squalor. c. 2.

has no effect or success. But when, on the contrary, any temporal loss or advantage comes before them, the sentences and penalties are of the most rigorous kind. Their whole time is spent in disposing of benefices and of the emoluments connected with them; and no man, however vicious his habits and scandalous his life, but is admitted to a clerical office if he have money to offer. About the improvement of the clergy or the extirpation of heresy and so forth, our magnates of Rome never waste a thought.

Lest any, however, should fancy that this must needs be, *Matthew* enquires[1] into the *right claimed by the Romish chair to fill the higher offices*, and to collate to the benefices of the Church, when these are in the patronage of the clergy. He denies any such right, and represents it as an encroachment upon the long-established and statutory privilege of election partaining to the chapters, as well as upon the prerogatives of the bishops and other dignitaries, to whom the nomination to the inferior offices belongs. If it be said that this is done to punish the chapters and prelates for having exercised badly their right of election and provision, the Bishop of Worms replies, that for the same reason, the right ought also to be withdrawn from the Romish Court, which has exercised it no better. Besides, it is not conceivable, that all the prelates had made a bad use of their right, and if many had done so, the part of a righteous judge is not to deprive an entire body of their justly acquired privileges, but to prevent the abuse of them. It may likewise be asked, proceeds *Matthew*, if the chair of Rome, when it commenced these proceedings, believed, or if it now believes, that it can appoint to vacant offices better than the bishops, prelates, and chapters? If it does not so believe, it is the height of madness to usurp the power of a bad appointment, and thus to withhold from the offices, and all interested in them, the benefit which would result from one of an opposite character. If, however, this be believed, it involves the highest presumption.[2] For, in no human way, can the Romish chair know as much of the circumstances of the bishoprics, monasteries, benefices, and candidates, (although on such knowledge a right choice depends), as

[1] Ibid. from the third chapter.

[2] Magna praesumtio.

those who have informed themselves about these matters on the very spot. If it be said: It is more likely that the Pope will be more *willing*, and take greater pains, to make good appointments than the bishops and prelates, I reply: On the contrary, it is far less likely that all bishops are wicked, than that a single individual is so. Supposing, however, a Pope to be wickedly inclined, which is not an impossible case, the whole affair would then go to ruin. As respects the bishops, this supposition is not probable, because the consequence of its truth would be the subversion of the Church, and that is incredible, because the Church-general, and the communion of saints, represented by the bishops, is infallible. Just as little will the Pope take greater pains. For even supposing his intentions good, still, owing to the incomparably greater extent of his business, and his imperfect acquaintance with the circumstances of each particular case, there is no possibility of his carrying them into effect. If, on the other hand, the bishops, though better acquainted with local circumstances, are really careless and negligent in the appointments, they ought to be deprived not merely of their right of nomination, but of their whole power. The fact, however, that the pastoral care, though a far more important trust, is left to them, and only the right of nomination taken away, excites a strong suspicion, that more attention is paid to the revenues of the offices, than to the souls of the flock. Nor can it be said that the Romish chair has taken upon itself the nomination to these offices, from pure brotherly love and piety, and in order to liberate the prelates from cares and dangers. For charity, when well regulated, begins at home, and loves a neighbour, only as much as oneself. The love supposed, however, would be loving a neighbour more than oneself, and consequently would be extravagant, irrational, and absurd. It would also be a very strange kind of piety which exposed itself to a danger, from which it was anxious to deliver a brother, and more so, if this could only be done at the expense of the Church."

Let it be supposed,[1] however, although it is not admitted, that the Pope possessed the universal right of nomination, what good would arise from it? The only apparent result seems to have

[1] De squalor. c. 4.

been, and daily to be, the introduction of manifold evils into the Church. The clergy are plunged unnecessarily into great expense, trouble, and danger. A worldly zeal, and an impatient pursuit after promotion, are kindled in their hearts. Ambition is powerfully fomented. Every one hopes for the death of another, perhaps even of many, whose offices have been promised to him. Hence arise a multitude of disputes, difficulties, and new decisions of the court, which require to be again explained, altered, or revoked; so that what was lawful a year ago is now unlawful and condemned, and all is uncertainty with those who are the court's advisers. The apostolic chair itself confesses that its graces have been conferred without sufficient cause. It makes a multitude of exceptions, imposes silence, recalls what it formerly granted, reforms, annuls, quashes, I venture not to say, falsely and mendaciously, and yet I cannot say, without falsehood and mendacity. Were I to speak boldly, I would call it *fraud*, when a man is excluded from an office which he had procured at great cost both of labour and money. For there is nothing which the laws more dislike than that any one should be cheated out of his right; and if for once such revocation be justly done, why is the same thing constantly repeated, unless it be to obtain money. But, however this may be, I well know, that it gives rise to scandal, and brings disgrace upon the Court of Rome to such a degree, that its proceedings are looked upon as child's play and absurdity. The laity obtain a handle for insulting the whole clerical body; While strong-minded men, who take the thing to heart, must look down and keep silence, and retire abashed, or openly admit, lest they should appear to sanction, such disorders.

Now, for the purpose of obviating all these scandals and evils, by which so many worthy men are restrained from entering the sacred profession, and so many worthless characters find admission into it,[1] it is necessary, in the opinion of *Matthew of Cracow*,[2] to return to the original state of the law, wholly to abolish reversions and never to appoint to offices, until they are actually vacant. Should any one suggest that in that case many candidates would hie to Rome in pursuit of the same benefice, and all

[1] See the end of the 4th chapter, and p. 180.

[2] De squalor, c. 5.

but one get their journey for their pains, and that thus the same evils would return, the remedy is very simple. It is to leave the nomination to the ordinaries, to whom it formerly belonged. The objections which might be raised to this proposal, he obviates seriously and wittily, but always with point. If it be alleged, that the bishops would then give the situations to their nephews, kinsmen, and servants, he asks in reply, Whether that would not be better, than giving them to the relatives of cardinals and others connected with the conclave? But at the same time he demands, that good bishops be given to the Church, and meets the allegation that this is difficult to effect, with the just remark, that if the Pope cannot make a good election in the single instance of the bishop, it must be much more difficult for him to do it in the thousand or more instances of the other clergy (of a diocese). Were any one to take a very secular view of the matter and object, that were the Pope to be left without favours to bestow, men would no more care about him; they would neither respect, nor apply to him, and he might even be reduced so low as to want the means of subsistence, *Matthew* replies:[1] The reverence which is undoubtedly due in the highest degree to the Pope must be sound, *i.e.*, it must be based upon corresponding qualities, such as justice, clemency, holiness, and benevolence: When by other means, as for example by violence, he seeks to secure honour, that is not true honour but tyranny. If, however, he exercise justice, punish crime, fulfil the sacred obligations of his office, then he will not lack true honour, and if in that way he seek to earn his bread, God, who never forsakes any of his people, will not suffer his vicegerent to seek it in vain. But what has resulted from the practice which has hitherto obtained? Nothing but a mass of *simony*.[2] Simony, however, is heresy, and no venial, but a very heinous sin. It robs all who commit it of grace, and places them in the state of eternal perdition, so that the Pope and all who take part in the sale of offices are living in a state of condemnation; for the practice and encouragement of simony, as now carried on in the court of Rome, is neither accidental, nor proceeds from want of thought, but on the contrary is deliberate and intentional, has grown into a habit, and is therefore

[1] De squalor. c. 6. [2] Ibid. c. 7. comp. p. 180.

unpardonable. This assertion, says *Matthew*, will appear harsh to many, and I myself at first shrank not merely from the words, but even from the thought.[1] Certain it is, however,[2] that he who becomes a suitor to the Pope seeks to acquire the right to an ecclesiastical charge or dignity, and consequently to something spiritual, and that the Pope, either directly, or through the medium of some third person, bestows it upon him. This is not done, however, unless some temporal gain be previously given upon the one side, and received upon the other, or, if not given, at least stipulated and secured by contract. Accordingly, to the utmost of their power, the one party sells, and the other purchases, that which is spiritual; and inasmuch as it is in the intentional sale or purchase of spiritual things that simony consists,[3] both parties are simoniacal, and so are all who help to make the bargain, and knowingly promote the shameful traffic. . . And how ruinous are other consequences which flow from such practices![4] The churches are cheated with unworthy priests; the spiritual office is abused; able and godly men are excluded from it; the universities and schools[5] fall into decline, because the men of talent and science, who have spent their fortune and their strength in study, are not promoted, but passed over for the sake of worthless persons, who stoop to employ the customary arts of intrigue. Of course, others who perceive that it is not merit but vice which meets with reward, withdraw from study altogether, and the sciences fall into a state of declension, from which it will be difficult or perhaps impossible to revive them. And this is an incalculable loss for the Church, which indispensably requires learned men to manage her affairs.

Matthew now takes up the sophistical *excuses* urged by the Romish courtiers *for their simony*. The notion that this is a sin which the Pope *cannot* commit justly appears to him to need no answer.[6] The allegation that the money is taken, not for the place, but for the trouble of bestowing it (*Matthew* thinks that in

[1] De squalor. c. 8. [2] Ibid. c. 9.
[3] De squalorib. c. 13. p. 56. [4] Ibid. c. 9. near the end.
[5] Studia generalia et particularia.
[6] De squalorib. c. 11. *Matthew* says on the contrary: "Seeing an Apostle could sell Christ, there is no reason why an Apostolical man should not sell the sacrament of his body."

that case a florin would be quite a sufficient fee), he, no less justly, considers[1] low-minded and unworthy of so great a prince. A third excuse,—to the effect that, the Pope being lord of all, and particularly of the clergy and their benefices, what he takes from them cannot, in any particular case, be reckoned the price of the benefice, but is really a portion of his own property—gives him occasion to make several very weighty remarks.[2] *Matthew* admits that the Pope is *Lord of all*, not merely of the clergy, but, as Christ's vicar, of all Christians, yea, of all who are called to Christianity. In this case, however, sovereignty is, in his opinion, nothing more than a certain dignity and pre-eminence[3] of rank, by virtue of which, one man has power and authority over others; and others are subject, but only to a definite extent, to him. He distinguishes various kinds of rule, as, for instance, that of the husband over the wife, that of the father over the children, that of the master over the servant, and, in like manner, that of the Pope over an independent prince, over a vassal of the Church, over a clergyman, and over a servant in his palace. "God alone," he says, "is the absolute Lord of all. All other lordship is *limited*. No man, not even the Pope, has any more power than what God has given him. *The first restriction*, as regards the Pope, consists in his being appointed the supreme vicar of Christ. This implies that he holds the office for edification, and not for destruction. He has, consequently, no power to do anything which he knows, or ought to know, will tend to the injury of the Church, or to the ruin of the common weal, or which will prove a bad example, or create a scandal. In order, however, that the Pope may the more certainly accomplish the objects of his government, *another legal restriction* and law have been imposed upon him, viz., the Gospel and the whole canon of Sacred Scripture, and no less the Councils, which have been solemnly sanctioned by the Church. And as it is impossible for any single individual to possess discernment, knowledge, and constant recollection sufficient for all his duties, the Pope is *in so far also restricted*, and obliged to acknowledge himself a fallible man,[4] and in many respects, insufficient for such a lordship. He ought, therefore, to

[1] De squalorib. c. 14. [2] Ibid. c. 16. [3] praeeminentia.
[4] hominem defectuosum—who is not sufficient of himself.

seek and take advice, and apply for it to good and wise councillors. How could it ever have been the will of the Lord, who bought the Church with his blood, that any one man, who may possibly be ignorant and ill-disposed, but who, at any rate, is subject to mistake and error, should govern it merely according to his own fancy? Supposing also that Ecclesiastical affairs and preferments do really belong to the Pope, still he can use them only within the limits imposed upon his sovereignty, and therefore only according to the rule of Scripture, for the edification of the Church, on certain rational grounds, and in due form. In Scripture,[1] however, not a word is said of the right of the Pope to keep benefices in his own hand, or to put them into his purse. Nor does this tend to edify the Church, for it drives away from its offices those who are the foundation on which Christ has reared it, viz., the poor, however fit they may be, for the duties, and it fosters avarice and cupidity. And to maintain that the clergy, both high and low, are so slavishly dependent and venal, that the Pope, without any rule of law, may rob them of their property and reduce them to indigence,—what is that but lowering the priestly dignity and giving up both the clergy and the sacraments to contempt?"

Liberal-minded as he was, it is true, the German Bishop[2] does not scruple to admit that the Pope, as well as any other prince, must have sufficient means to live respectably, and enable him to devote his whole attention to the public weal. But he insists that the funds for that purpose shall be raised in a proper manner, and not by simoniacal compacts, deception, and fraud. And to the objection that it cannot be otherwise, and that the Pope must endeavour in every way to secure his rights, he replies, If the necessities of the Pope be really urgent, and if his object be not the mere accumulation of treasure, all he needs to do, in order to raise money in a pious way, is just to assemble the bishops and advise with them. Were they indeed to refuse to assemble, it would be no more than the Church of Rome deserved, because by her neglect of the holy Councils she has dishabituated the prelates from attending them. It is a righteous judgment upon that Church, that having chosen to govern without the advice of

[1] De squalorib. c. 17. [2] Ibid. c. 18.

others, others have also withdrawn their support from her. From the *neglect of the Councils*[1] numerous evils have arisen both in past and present times, and though there had been nothing else, this destructive schism, which for so many years has kept all Christendom in darkness and terror, is bad enough. A General Council, if it had been held (as used to be the case), would have terminated it long ago.[1]

Matthew, in conclusion, finds another important point to discuss, namely, the allegation, that though the evils cannot be justified, *neither can they be resisted or punished.* Many of his cotemporaries who perceived the errors of the Popes, but who also desired to uphold the absolute authority of the Papacy, pleaded that although the Pope does that which is wrong, it is right to obey him. He cannot be resisted. We ought not even to pass judgment upon the vicegerent of Christ. It is not the members who should govern the head, but the head who should govern the members. If every one were to take upon him to censure the conduct of the prelates, and at his pleasure to resist them, what would become of the authority of their office? Now here *Matthew* draws a distinction[2] between two kinds of judgment, one of which is purely inward and confined to the mind, the other public and judicial. Of the former, he affirms that no person whose acts are public, not even the Pope, can escape it. The second, as being an authoritative sentence[3] upon persons and actions, is entrusted mainly to the higher judges and prelates, and in an eminent manner to the Pope. In this case, the inferior ought not to pass judgment upon the superior. Even the general body ought not to do it, so long as there is a superior to whom that right pertains, and who is willing to execute justice. If, however, there be no one who is either entitled, or disposed to do it, then the society collectively, or they who are its representatives, may judge and condemn the transgressor for that in which he has transgressed, and as to which he shows himself incorrigible. Supposing this case to occur[4] with the Pope, then, as he has no superior, the Church, or the Church's re-

[1] This passage shows in the clearest manner that the treatise was written prior to the Council at Pisa, and consequently before 1409.

[2] De squalorib. c. 20. [3] autoritativa definitio.

[4] De squalorib. c. 22.

presentatives, would, according to the Scripture[1] itself, be authorized to pass sentence upon him. *The Church receives her power and honour directly from God.* She is connected in the closest way with her bridegroom Christ. She elects the Pope, and if the Pope be united with Christ, he is so really but as the member, minister, and son of the Church. Except for her he would never have been Pope, and would as such be nothing. When, for the sake of his office, and out of flattery and devotion, he is called the bridegroom, the lord or the head of the Church, the language is always to be understood as figurative. The Church has not two heads. It has one only, and that one is Christ and not Christ's substitute, who has been appointed merely to protect the bride, and who is called her head only as being her chief member, and not for his own sake, but solely on account of his office. No doubt the Apostle justly says, that "Whosoever resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God," but the Pope has no power to govern badly or to destroy, and he who resists him in any such attempt, resists not the power but the abuse of it, and so does not resist God from whom the abuse does not come. Just as little is the text of the Apostle, Rom. xiv. 14, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant," capable of application here, for the Pope is not another's. He is the Church's servant, son, and protector; or if he be another's, then has she the right to exclude him from her fellowship. The further objection, that subjects ought not to judge their rulers, is answered by *Matthew* to this effect. The principle is true in all matters that are either good or indifferent; but where there is a manifest mischief, the case is altered. The head ought to govern the members, not to mislead or destroy them. When he does that, he does not govern them, and then neither are they bound to obey him, because he thereby ceases to fulfil the duties of the head. Finally, as to the question, What would become of the office of the prelates, were every one to criticise the motives of their conduct? *Matthew* says,[2] Even though the root or motive of their actions were not to be enquired into, the fruits would still bring it to light, and when we have once tasted it, we cannot possibly refrain from judging between good fruit and bad, and so exercising the faculty of rea-

[1] Matth. xviii. 17. [2] De squalorib. c. 22. near the end.

son as either to approve or reject it, for reason was given us to be the rule of our actions.

Such is the vision of the Bishop of Worms. If it be fallacious and vain, he entreats that this may be shewn. "If, however," he concludes, "my vision is true and manifest to every one, who pleases to use his eyes, then let us all arise and lift our voice, that no one may remain in ignorance of so destructive a fire and of its terrible spread."

What *Matthew of Cracow* had witnessed was in fact no dream, but, as numerous voices from almost all the countries of Europe, during the 15th century, testify, a bitter and most deplorable reality. His experiences are substantially the same as we find expressed by independent men in England, Bohemia, France, and even Italy, and his principles identical with those which were maintained especially by the great French theologians, and by the Reformatory Councils of the age. We have here what may be considered characteristical of the tendency which aimed and strove after a Reformation upon the basis of the Church and Hierarchy, viz., a deep and pervading conviction of the corruption in the Church, especially in the Romish court, and a persuasion of the necessity of some restriction, to be applied by the Church and her representatives, to the Papal power, and by means of which the Papacy might be reduced to its pristine, religious, and salutary intention. We have here the doctrine of the human frailty and fallibility of the Pope, and of his being amenable to trial and deposition,[1] by the representatives of the Church. We have the acknowledgment of the indispensable necessity of General Councils to advise and watch over and supply the deficiencies of the Papacy. That which excites our wonder is, —First and in general, that these doctrines were propounded so early, in so intelligent and decided a manner, and by a *German* bishop. Secondly and relatively to our present sketch, that this bishop should have laboured in the city which was afterwards the scene on which our reformer, *John of Wesel*, acted his part; and that the work of the latter upon the state of the clergy should be pretty much like a continuation of that of the former, although, as was natural, it expatiates less upon the

[1] *Gerson*, as is notorious, used for this the term, *auferibilitas*.

basis of the Church's aristocracy, and goes decidedly further in a reformatory course. We thus find, both from above and from below, certain radical convictions, different as to the mode in which they were to be executed, and yet the same in tendency, joining hand in hand, and may thence infer their consequence at the time, and the future issue which awaited them.

The work of *Wesel* which we have here in view treats of *The authority, duty, and power of the pastors of the Church.*[1] There can be no doubt, as we have already observed, that it was written during the author's sojourn at Worms, and it is the most important monument of his reformatory efforts for the good of the whole Church. Less methodical and scholar-like than the treatise against Indulgences, and sometimes harsh and intemperate in expression, it is yet a lively testimony of *Wesel's* ability and ecclesiastical zeal, and no doubt also an exponent of the sentiments of many of his cotemporaries. For this reason, the substance shall here be somewhat fully stated. Induced by the letter of a friend, whose scriptural knowledge and Christian sentiments he commends, *Wesel* proposes to determine[2] "what really are the functions of the office of priests, and *in how far their enactments are obligatory upon Christians.* Next what duties may, in the name of the magistracy, be imposed upon the people, or at least ought rightfully to be imposed upon them, under the authority of princes; and finally, to shew that the tyranny of the great ought to be endured and their commands not unadvisedly resisted, in as far as the cause of the Gospel is not imperilled by submission to wrongs.".

"Christ," says *Wesel*,[3] "the restorer of the true law, nay himself the very law of life, defines the authority of priests when he says, 'The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do,' and elsewhere, 'He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that

[1] De auctoritate, officio et potestate Pastorum ecclesiasticorum Opusculum—in *Walch* Monim. med. aevi. vol. ii. Fasc. 2. p. 115—162.

[2] De auctoritate, officio etc. p. 117.

[3] Ibid. p. 118.

despiseth you, despiseth me.' And so, finally, does the Apostle in the words, 'Whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God.' It follows that, if priests really occupy the seat of Moses, they teach the law of God, and God teaches through them. When, however, they please to teach that which is their own, then don't listen to them nor do what they say. Whatsoever, therefore, they say, sitting upon the chair (*i.e.*, judging according to the Divine law), that do, not because it seems right to them, but because what the mouth of the priest enjoins in such a case proceeds from God. On the contrary, whatever they speak of themselves, is a lie, for all men are liars, and the children of men, vanity."

And here *Wesel* will not permit the *mere character of priest* or even of *Pope* to be objected to him as constituting a sufficient guarantee that what is dictated to us is Divine. "Because," says he, "I despise as a vain mask the name and title, the honour and quality of whomsoever they may be, were it even an angel, not to speak of the Pope, or a human being, provided they do not utter the words of life, but merely vaunt their office and dignity, and pretend that by these they have received authority to ordain what they please. Christ himself despised all this in the apostleship of the traitor Judas; and St Paul would have all honour withheld even from angels, unless they minister as messengers to Christ, so far as to require that such masks and pretenders[1] should be an anathema to the godly. So far am I from believing that outward shew, and vain splendour, and pompous words, and the heathen salutation of Master, have any weight." In proof of the manifest truth of what he said, *Wesel* adduces in particular the example and words of Paul.[2] That Apostle withstood Peter to his face, and thereby testified that God does not respect the person of a man. In like manner, the Papal title, the reputation of scholarship, and the fame of science, are purely personal things. All that such masks and spectres write and command, can be regarded as true only in as far as the word of God prescribes, which word alone the Lord commands us to hear. The Apostle Paul himself claimed the belief of men solely for the sake of the Gospel entrusted to him by God, not on account of his person,

[1] hujusmodi faciebus et personis.

[2] De auctoritate pp. 119. 120. 121. 122.

and not for the weight of his name. Even he aspires to no more than to be a minister, apostle, and herald, and glories so little in what he suffers for the Gospel, that he declares it to be folly to speak of his labours. Before such a pattern, let the flatterers, whom the Bishop of Rome permits to honour him with the titles of "Holy" and "Most holy," be silent and not breathe a word. Let the truth of the Gospel be proclaimed, and the work of faith extolled, and then we shall bow the neck to Christ, and to the Pope, as Christ's ambassador and faithful servant. That which Christ says, "The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me," ought the Pope also to be able to say. He only who teaches the word of the Lord,[1] he only who, with insight and skill, feeds the flock, is a true apostle, a shepherd, and bishop, according to God's own heart. "But the man from whom I hear nothing of Christ's righteousness, and in whom I perceive no insight and knowledge, I refuse to confess as a master, I own not in him the authority of a bishop, nor reverence him as a pastor. What then remains but that all such are dumb idols, serving only their belly and not Jesus Christ, nominal shepherds and mere titular bishops, who, by vain semblances and outward pomps, miserably impose upon the people. I care not, however, for the two-horned mitre. The shining infula affects not me. I abominate the priestly slippers decorated with precious stones and gold. I laugh at the high-sounding names, the tragic titles, the lofty triumphs. They are mere semblances, and any thing rather than the badges of a true pastor, bishop, or teacher, when that is lacking which alone gives them worth, and renders them tolerable."

The main ground on which the Papal devices and traditions were defended, and which was their *antiquity*, and the long observance of them by our forefathers, *Wesel* meets as follows.[2] "It is," he says, "an argument which will be easily parried by any one who reflects that the Babylonian Empire is not commended for having stood for several centuries. . . Besides the Lord curses those who for the sake of human traditions transgress the Divine commands. They who burden the people with new

[1] De auctoritate pp. 123. 124. 125.
[2] Ibid. pp. 126. 12.

precepts show themselves not ambassadors of God and stewards of his word, but assume the airs of masters and usurp dominion. Wherefore, dear brethren, let us follow the exhortation of the Apostle, and be no longer children tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine. We have a right to require from the Pope and the priests, as successors of Christ and the Apostles, the word of God. If they feed us with that, let us listen to them as to the Lord himself, but if not, then will we not admit them to dwell in our hearts, that so we may not seem to have fellowship with their wicked works and lying words."

Wesel then proceeds, in the remainder of his work,[1] to depict the *contrast* between the *actual state* of manners in the Church, and that which, according to the *word of God*, might be *required* and *expected of the priests*. "Let every one," he says, "to whom a bishopric or pastoral charge is entrusted, hear the words of the Apostle, 'Feed the flock of Christ, not by constraint but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind, neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.' Now-a-days, however, (alas for the mischief!) there are in the Church more who feast and hunt than who labour, and who, in this respect, are very different from the Apostle, who sought not gifts but fruit. All are engaged in the pursuit of money. Not only is the salvation of souls little attended to, it is not attended to at all. The prelates ought not to be lords over God's heritage, which means that the magnates of the Church are not to be sovereigns and monarchs over subjects, but servants and stewards of the mysteries, even as Christ, the true lord and shepherd, took upon him the form of a servant and bequeathed to us an example of humble ministering. . . . If, however,[2] we contrast with this the pursuits and manners of the Bishops, and even of the Pope, where shall we find zeal for the flock of Christ? where patterns of an evangelical life? where morals worthy of a Christian? In point of fact all order and rule are completely subverted, and you will see pastors who care for nothing less than to guide the flock with their doctrine and holy lives. Christ entrusted his sheep to Peter, not to exhaust, slaughter, and scatter them, but to feed them with the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. The same

[1] Especially from p. 128.

[2] pp. 132. 133. 134. 135.

sword is likewise given to the bishops, in order that they may use it to smooth the rough places, to strengthen that which is weak, and bind up that which is broken. The temporal sword, however, which Peter drew vindictively, the Lord commanded him to sheathe. Of the spiritual sword our bishops are now ashamed, but the other they plunge into the entrails of their brethren. Worthy shepherds truly! In like manner the diligence of the Apostles is thus depicted in the Gospel, 'They went forth and preached everywhere,[1] the Lord working with them and confirming the word with signs following.' He had, however, previously commanded them, 'Go ye and teach all nations.'[2] Do you understand this, ye shepherds of the people? Do you hear it, ye bishops of souls? If you are thus called bishops or pastors, if you bear even the lofty title of Pope, study to be that which your names import. These express far less of sovereignty than of guardianship. Guide, therefore, (for this is the only sort of sovereignty which benefits the Church) guide your sheep, that they may never wander from the pasture of evangelic truth. For if, in consequence of your negligence, any of them fall a prey to the wolf or the lion, the Lord will require from you its blood. We owe to superiors obedience. Superiors owe to us a watchful care." But as the circumstances of the times required, *Wesel* expresses himself most strongly and fully upon the *ambition* of the clergy. He says:[3] "Originally and by nature all men were born equal. The difference between them is a defect which has arisen from their moral diversities—from the merit of one and the guilt of another. This, no doubt, has rendered it necessary that one man should be governed by another. Those who stand at the head of affairs, however, ought not to look merely at their present power, but likewise at their original equality. They ought not to rejoice so much in being superior to others as in doing them good. If the rulers of the people and the dignitaries of the Church were of this mind, the Church would be in a much better condition. The zeal with which the Saviour sought to extinguish ambition may be inferred from the fact,[4] that he does not leave his followers at liberty to take a name designative of pre-eminence, but ex-

[1] Mark xvi. 20. [2] Matth. xxviii. 29. [3] De auctoritate p. 139.
[4] Ibid. p. 140.

pressly forbids them to assume the proud titles of Master and Lord. "For this reason, I am often surprised that these names have found their way to the spiritual heads of the Church, and that theologians and philosophers assume them as their peculiar privilege; although there is but one who is our Lord and Master, and in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; not to speak of the blasphemous and fulsome titles of Most wise, Most venerable, Most blessed, Vicar of Christ, Hero, Demigod, and even Most godly, with which his flatterers fawn[1] upon the Pope, and which, considering the innate self-love of man, can scarcely fail to make the be-purpled ape vain of his ornaments, and lead him to fancy himself beautiful, and to exult like a braggart."[2] *Wesel* then infers from the ambitious and haughty manners of the clergy of all ranks, their undutiful *neglect of the poor.*[3] He calls to mind what the apostles had done in this respect, and then adds: "Of all this there is not a trace in the bishops and priests of our day, so that the deacons and sub-deacons no longer know the purport of their office, or neglect it and devolve their duties upon others usually called dispensers of the Holy spirit."[4] In fine, taking a view of the manner in which *the Divine worship is conducted, Wesel* concludes with these words,[5] "Behold, Christian brother, how the whole face of the primitive Church of Christ has been changed! It is considered priestly merely to move the lips, and coldly and unintelligently to mumble the prayers. It is thought a glorious thing when the deacons in Churches bray forth the Gospels and Epistles. They only are considered to have done their part well, and gain the public applause, who, in chaunting, lift their voice to the loudest pitch. None cares whether the psalm is likewise sung with the spirit and the heart, so that one is disposed to believe, that theirs is no mistake who look upon human life as a mere comedy, and imagine that this is nowhere more manifest than in the Church, and among the clergy."

Having thus depicted the demoralized state of the clergy, *Wesel* proceeds to shew[7] *of what sort the commandments of the*

[1] cauda adblandiuntur.
[2] thrasonico more.
[3] De auctoritate p. 141.
[4] spiritus sancti administratores.
[5] De auctoritate p. 142.
[6] stentores et mussatores.
[7] De auctoritate p. 143.

bishops ought to be and in how far they are obligatory upon Christians, and here again his chief criterion is the word of God as contained in Scripture. Nothing but what is there laid down binds and obliges Christians. The prelates may inculcate other things, but the transgression of these by no means involves the guilt of mortal sin. Besides, all spiritual authority is given for the purpose of building up, and not of destroying the faith, and according to this rule we must judge of their enactments. The Papal commands, accordingly, in so far as they promote charity, are to be carefully observed, though certainly not on account of the sovereign power of their author, but in freedom of spirit. When, however, the cause of Christianity on any occasion requires us to act contrary to them, it is lawful for every Christian[1] to protest and to subordinate the commandments of men to the duties of charity. Nor is it difficult for the spiritual man, who judges all things and is himself judged by none, to determine when such a case occurs. No doubt there is reason to fear, that an act of disobedience of the kind may give offence to our neighbour, and if it be possible to obey the governing power without endangering the truth, it is wrong not to obey it. In the opposite case, however, when there is a risk of injuring the truth, we must not shrink from giving offence. "If then[2] the commandments and traditions of the higher powers do not run counter to the interests of mutual charity and the public peace, and if they are consonant with the cause of Christianity, we shall observe them not from a regard to them as laws, but from the free spirit of love, that we may live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world,—soberly as respects ourselves, righteously as respects our brethren, and piously as respects our Maker. If, however, the mandates of the prelates cannot be kept without prejudice to charity, it is then, in my opinion, no mortal sin to digress from them, especially if we feel no reluctance inwardly from the testimony of the spirit and of faith. For that which is not of faith is sin."

The Pope, the bishops, and prelates, can make no law on which a Christian is not at liberty to form his judgment. So that obedience ought not to be considered obligatory, if such enact-

[1] De auctoritate p. 144.

[2] Ibid. pp. 146, 147.

ments be indiscreet[1] or unjust, or if they be a violation of charity and deserve the name of cruelty and tyranny. Moreover the Pope, although he be Pope, and as some imagine a Demigod, is subject to the rebuke of the humblest Christian who has more insight and wisdom than himself. Every one is, for Christ's sake, bound to endeavour, by brotherly admonition, to bring his fellow-believer to a right mind. Even the Pope is our brother, and a fellow-heir with the very humblest Christian, being incorporated with every believer into the same body of the church, of which Christ is the head. Why should it seem strange therefore, if, when he plays the fool, the member which has the more abundant honour should be set right by the member which seems to be the more feeble? . . . It is not his name which makes the Pope a Christian, but faith by the grace of Christ.[2] Daniel, one of the least of the prophets, judges the elders. The humility of Christ puts to shame the pride of the Pharisees. The man who instructs and corrects us with the word of God, he is our Pope and Bishop, Pastor and Lord, though the most illiterate and humble of all the people. On the contrary the triple crown, the glittering bulls, the proud hats, and priestly decorations, are all to blame for the disregard into which the word of God is fallen among the humble.

The genuine fulfilling of the Law, that which alone is acceptable to God, must flow from an inward source, from the spirit, from faith, from love. If this be true of the Law of God, it is much more true of that of man. It is hence a strange and intolerable presumption on the part of the prelates,[3] to burden with new commandments a Christian, governed as he is by the eternal and true Law of God's spirit, of faith and of charity. What defect is there in the righteousness of the righteous which can be made up by the observance of human institutions? Who is entitled to prescribe laws to the soul except Him who worketh all in all? God forbid! . . . . . It hence follows[4] that if you are a believer, you have nothing to do with the Pope, who is a man, and nothing to hope from man at all. Nay, so far as spiritual gifts and things which tend to salvation are concerned,

[1] indiscretum. De auctorit. p. 149.
[3] Ibid. p. 152. Ibid. p. 153.

you yourself have received quite as much as the Pope and the prelates. Any help that human laws and Papal decrees could possibly give you in the attainment of salvation is given more freely, richly, and immediately by God himself, who is liberal to all who call upon His name."

Such is *Wesel's* view of spiritual power. He restricts it so exclusively to the ministry of the word and to the exercise of charity, that in his opinion the moment it oversteps these bounds, it ceases to be episcopal, and becomes tyranny. He then treats also of the *duty* we owe to the *temporal power*, or that which relates to the body and to its employments. And here he lays down the following propositions:[1]—"The condition of the world, comprehending as it does both the good and bad, cannot subsist without civil government and the rule of princes. If all were true Christians, one and the same law of charity would reign, and connect them in the unity of the faith by the spirit.[2] The Lord himself, however, enjoins us to 'Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's,' and thereby appears to admit the claims of earthly power. We find the Apostle Paul doing the same, in the Epistle to the Romans, and Peter, in the 2d chapter of his 1st Epistle. The *commands* of princes may be divided into three classes. *In the first place*, either they are purely Christian and heavenly, as tending to the public peace, or as subservient to the unity of the Church, or as establishing reciprocal benevolence. In this case, it is proper to obey the commands of the twofold power, and to do it at once, not from fear or with reluctance, but with a cheerful and a ready mind, for they are commands of that charity which seeks not its own. Or, *secondly*, they inculcate things which are diametrically oppo-

[1] De auctorit. pp. 155. 156. 157.

[2] According to this we must understand correctly what one of the Paradoxes puts into *Wesel's* mouth, "Whosoever resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God, so, *however, as to wish that the power did not exist*," Parad. p. 291 b. *Wesel* thought that in the primitive and pure condition of mankind, there was no ruling power, and that in the ideal condition of the kingdom of God, there would be none. But inasmuch as it is now necessary, in consequence of the actual condition of the world, the Christian should freely and fairly submit to it as an ordinance of God, obeying the example and verdict of Christ and His Apostles.

site to the law of charity and good will. In that case, we must obey God rather than man, and with body and soul resile from that which the princes enjoin, that we may not appear to have fellowship with their wicked works. It will even be lawful to protest, to resist them in season and out of season, and openly to rebuke the tyrants and soul-murderers. We have examples of such conduct in the prophets, apostles, and martyrs, nay in Christ himself. Lastly and *thirdly*,[1] the magistracy may ordain things which stand, so to speak, between these two, being neither sinful, on the one hand, nor yet of any great or certain worth on the other. In this case, the command should be a sufficient reason for us to obey, but with reserve of our judgment. For everything ought to be squared by the rule, and weighed in the balance of charity and the public good, if we expect to reap the fruit of our obedience. In a word,[2] I acknowledge the authority of rulers in things which may be required of us without prejudice to piety. In such cases we have the example of Christ; for although bound by no law, he yet paid tribute to Caesar; and in such cases no less do the Apostles recommend obedience. . . . Yea, if they (the civil magistrates) sometimes even harshly oppress us, still we ought to tolerate the wrong, although they shall not be held blameless for the abuse of their power in the day of judgment. It is true, the princes little deserve that we should endure their tyranny, and bow our necks to their oppressions, but Christ wills, charity requires, and a good conscience towards God[3] commands us to do so. Even the worst princes reign by Christ's consent, and so serve as instruments to correct our sins. Neither ought the public peace to be thoughtlessly imperilled, under the pretext of Christian liberty. Rather than do so, we ought, for the glory of God, and in compliance with the example of Christ, to bear any burdens, annoyances, persecutions, and robberies. . . . Let the flesh be beaten to pieces, let the old man suffer affliction, let the body of sin die, if by these means the soul may be rescued, and the new man rise again. . . . This we say, however, not to excuse the

[1] Ibid. p. 158. [2] Ibid. pp. 159, 160, 161, 162.
[3] conscientia Dei.

princes, who thus vex and destroy. Let them see to it, that they do not abuse their power, nor wear the sword in vain. The judges of others will be strictly judged themselves, and they shall have judgment without mercy who have not exercised mercy."

If we look back to the two men whose writings we have reviewed, we find, that *Matthew of Cracow* and *John of Wesel* concur in opinion that the Church in all its members was infected with corruption, and stood in need of a radical improvement; and, in particular, that the Papacy, as the chief seat of the disease, required to be brought back to its original destination and to the true spirit of Christianity. Still there is this essential difference between them. The Bishop, more aristocratic in his position and sentiments, expects that the amendment of the Papacy will proceed mainly from a restriction of its powers, and better advice, on the part of the Church's representatives, the whole body of bishops and prelates—but still, no doubt, upon the basis and according to the rule of the Gospel; Whereas the preacher more democratically goes back to the Gospel at once, and to the liberty of the Christian founded thereon, assigns to all, even the humblest member of the Church, when standing upon the Word of God, and wielding the authority of the spirit of Christ, the right to contradict the unscriptural enactments of his ecclesiastical superiors, and even of the Pope, and in general to instruct every wanderer from the way of the Gospel. There is this second and kindred difference, that, as usual with men of his class, *Matthew of Cracow* tempers the sharpness of his opposition with more dignity and moderation; whereas *Wesel*, although, like Luther, strenuously insisting upon obedience even to an unjust magistracy, provided only the truth of God's Word remains unimpaired, gives way in a greater degree to violence and intemperance. In this respect *they severally represent, both in substance and manner, the two main tendencies of the opposition in the 15th century.* In both we find a praiseworthy and zealous attachment to the Church. Their object is the same, although they differ in the choice of means. The first of these tendencies was the more important for the time, and in the Councils of the 15th

century, was at last legitimized by the Church. The second had to win its way upwards, occasionally through severe conflicts, and not unfrequently persecutions, on the part of the former, as was the case with Huss in Constance. It contained in its bosom, however, most of the elements of the future, and history has declared in its favour.

PART THIRD.

WESEL'S TRIAL FOR HERESY

AND

RELATION TO AFTER TIMES.

CHAPTER FIRST.

WESEL'S TRIAL FOR HERESY.

For seventeen years *Wesel* had prosecuted his labours in Worms, and endured no ordinary share of difficulties, molestation, and conflict. By degrees, however, his reformatory writings, the unusual and often offensive license which, in preaching, he gave to his tongue, and the general line of conduct he pursued, had awakened a host of adversaries, and thus a violent end was put to his labours, which the course of nature must otherwise have speedily terminated. In February 1479, he was formally arraigned *before a court of Inquisition* in the archiepiscopal city of Mayence. This last step, however, seems to have been preceded by certain others of a preliminary kind. We still possess in manuscript the fragment of a letter[1] addressed

[1] It is to be found in a volume of promiscuous ecclesiastical writings in the University Library of Bonn, under the Rubric Histor. Ordd. religg. Nro. 466 b., after the manuscript copy of the trial of *Wesel*, bears the superscription, Subscriptam epistolam scripsit Doctor We-

by him to his immediate superior, Bishop Reinhard of Worms. The document wants both the conclusion and the date, and contains no distinct intimation that *Wesel* had yet been subjected to the Inquisitionary trial, and therefore it was probably written in 1478, while the storm was still impending. At the same time, it shows that already for a long time he had been enduring distresses of all kinds, and in particular it exhibits, in a most unfavourable light, the conduct of Reinhard of Sickingen, from whom, it is true, we have no justification. The hostility of this Bishop to *Wesel*, and the hand he took in his suppression, were natural consequences of his position and character, and are matters of positive certainty. The substance of the letter is as follows: *Wesel* accuses the Bishop of having been for a long time the enemy of his life,[1] his honour, and his fortune,—of his life, because, by innumerable vexations,[2] he had robbed him of sleep, and induced a state of body, which threatened him with early death,—of his honour, because he had brought upon him the imputation of heresy,—and of his fortune, because he had caused various portions of his salary to be withheld, and other plots to be forged against him. On the second of these particulars, which chiefly concerns us here, *Wesel* appeals to God and his conscience, dénies that he ever taught error or false doctrine, and then proceeds, "Nothing of the kind can possibly be derived from my discourses, in which I have always protested, that it was not my intention to teach anything contrary to the Christian faith, and the truth of the Holy Scriptures.[3] And yet, most venerable Bishop, you have averred, that I have been denounced to you as a teacher of false doctrine on matters of faith. You have not, however, proved the charge, nor ever even named the party who made it.[4] From which circumstance I conclude that it is of your own fabrication, unless the person

salia gracioso duo Reynhardo Epo Wormaciensi. The little collection, containing both printed and unprinted articles, was bequeathed to the University of Bonn by the late counsellor Bruch in Cologne.

[1] . . . Reverende Praesul, indies te fuisse et esse inimicum et adversarium corporis, honoris et bonorum meorum.

[2] vexationes nimias, innumeras.

[3] . . . in quibus semper protestatus sum salva fide christiana et veritate sacrarum scripturarum.

[4] delatorem.

who is dean of your Church, and your vicar in spiritual affairs, and of whom I have great suspicion, may have informed against me, which he must have done to the prejudice of his soul's salvation, and in violation of his oath, to study the interests of the churches of Worms and of all belonging to them. No doubt, you say, that public rumour has accused me of errors in doctrine.[1] Even that, however, I do not believe, because you have never taken the trouble fairly to investigate the truth of the report, if indeed there be any truth in it at all." This is strong enough, but *Wesel* further charges the Bishop with having set on foot the attempt to defame him as a heretic, in order that his salary might be stopped, for the benefit of the chapter. Nay he does not scruple to accuse the head of the Church of Worms of having burned one of the documents favourable to him in a law-suit, and of similar machinations.[2]

A letter like this, whether it was, as is certainly probable, the outcry of truth, or was founded, in part at least, upon the conjectures of suspicion, was not calculated to dispose the mind of a man like *Reinhard of Sickingen* in *Wesel's* favour. Whatever he had been before, he could not but be his enemy now. Other circumstances conspired to aggravate the storm gathering around the head of *Wesel*. He was a *Nominalist*, keenly opposed to the prevailing *Scholasticism*, and, in particular, to the now widely spread views of Thomas Aquinas.[3] He was an ardent friend of the more simple and practical doctrine of the Bible, a determined opponent of all the corruptions of the Hierarchy and Monastic orders, and the advocate of principles which robbed of all worth the entire system of ecclesiastical works, graces, penances, and punishments. Even this was quite sufficient ground to bring

[1] famam me accusasse de errore in materia fidei.

[2] This is done in the last part of the letter, where among other things it is said, hanc diffamationem contra me excitasti, ut praefati (the Chapter and a certain John Utzlinger or Etzlinger) habeant contra me acturi pro debitis locum excipiendi de infamia. In the sequel also, where mention is made of a letter important for *Wesel*, has literas tu fecisti et disposuisti comburi per Henricum Urtenberg scribam tuum. In hac tua contra me machinatione damnificasti me in centum et quadraginta flor. The rest is very illegible.

[3] Thomam peculiariter non coluerat, says an eye-witness of the trial for hersey, with whom we shall afterwards become acquainted.

upon him the irreconcilable hatred of the most powerful corporations both of the Church and of its universities. We must likewise, however, take into account the style in which he delivered his convictions, his recklessness, severity, and coarse popular diction, which was highly irritating. In the existing position of the Church, and regard being had to the interests of the Hierarchy, there was every cause for impeaching him: And when a just ground was once obtained, the inevitable consequence was that a multitude of other charges wholly groundless, or merely probable, should fasten to it and aggravate the accusation. It was also requisite to stir up against him the passions of the people, with whom he was so great a favourite, and for this purpose, several very odious and flagrant charges were circulated. It was reported that at Wiesbaden and other places he had said from the pulpit, that whoever sees the holy sacrament sees the Devil,[1] that he lived on familiar terms with *Jews*[2] and *Hussites*,[3] and that he was clandestinely a bishop of that sect. The first of these particulars we hold to be a pure slander, but the other two demand a brief consideration, before we pass to the trial itself.

It is notorious in how wretched a state of oppression and contempt the *Jews* were kept during the middle ages. They were regarded in no other light than as infidels and enemies of Christ, the refuse of mankind, on which God had set his brand. The magistrates merely tolerated them, and treated them as little better than outlaws; while they were frequently the object of cruel persecution and inhuman torture on the part of the people. Consonantly with these views, any degree of acquaintance with the Hebrew language and literature, which might be gained from them, was looked upon as of itself savouring of impiety, anti-christianism, and heresy. The fact was, however, that almost since the days of Jerome, the transmission of the Hebrew tongue and Scriptures had almost wholly ceased among the Christians,

[1] Examen magistrale art. 20.

[2] This point I do not find mentioned any where except in *Erhard* Gesch. des Wiederaufblühens, Th. i. s. 291. But presuming that one, in other respects a most conscientious enquirer, had good grounds for his assertion, and as it accords very well with the circumstances, I adopt the trait into my narrative, leaving it to the reader's option to consider the fact as hypothetical.

[3] Examen art. 3. 4. 5. and esp. art. 6.

and even the most learned theologians, of the West. The consequence was, that the restorers of Hebrew literature were obliged to gather their knowledge in the first instance from learned Jews, and it is well known how laboriously *Reuchlin* collected his Hebrew learning by associating with learned Rabbins in Germany and Italy, or, as he himself said, fished it together in fragments.[1] The strong prejudice, however, to which we have alluded, greatly obstructed intercourse with Jews, and all endeavours to turn their learning to account; And so it came to pass, that the revivers of the study had a sore conflict to wage with the mistaken piety of Christians and churchmen, and the fanaticism of the clergy and the people. The most celebrated instance of this is the attack made by the Inquisitors of Cologne upon *Reuchlin*. Reuchlin, however, was not the first who devoted attention to the Hebrew tongue. In this walk he was preceded and also encouraged by *John Wessel*, as he seems also to have been by *Wessel's* acquaintance, *John of Wesel*. When *Wesel* therefore is accused of holding intercourse with Jews, and of adopting their principles, we can scarcely construe this in any other sense, than that, desiring as a scriptural theologian to learn the Hebrew tongue, or add in general to his information, he had cultivated the acquaintance of learned Jews in Worms. Even in this district, however, a keen hatred of the Jews prevailed among the people, and during the reign of Bishop Frederick (of Dumneck[2]) had burst into a storm, which could only be calmed by the help of the Archbishop of Mayence and other princes.[3] In place, therefore, of recognising in *Wesel's* conduct a noble thirst of knowledge, his enemies brought it as an accusation against him, and one evidently calculated to tell upon the popular dislike of the Jews, that he had been misled by persons of that nation into antichristian heresies. It needs, however, a very slender acquaintance with *Wesel's* doctrines to perceive that they are, in no wise, directed against Christianity, but solely against ecclesiastical

[1] Preface to the third book of the Rudimenta hebraica. *Erhard* Geschichte des Wiederaufblühens, B. 2. S. 211.

[2] Between 1427 and 45.

[3] *Schannat* Hist. Episc. Wormat. T. i. p. 413. For other persecutions of the Jews during the same period, see *Gieseler* K. Gesch. ii. 3. s. 314.

abuses, and that, as respects a reaction in favour of Jewish principles, at least on a great scale, there was much more of that on the side of the Church now lapsed into legalism, than on the side of the reformers before the Reformation, who combated every trace of it.

There was more weight in the other charge, that he was a *Hussite*. This was no mere bug-bear, but founded upon actual facts. The doctrines which the Hussites professed had taken root extensively in these quarters. Even so early as the 13th century, the *Waldenses*, their pioneers, had spread into Germany. Numbers of them were to be found in Switzerland, on the Rhine, in Suabia, Thuringia, and Bavaria. They had here formed themselves into societies which corresponded with each other and endeavoured to propagate their tenets. They were particularly numerous in the district of the Upper Rhine, in and around *Strasburg*, where they were called the "Friends of God," and "*Winkeler*" (lurkers)[1] and they may be traced also in other places, such as Mayence, Augsburg and Dünkelsbühl. Detected, persecuted, and slain (for in these centuries vast multitudes of both sexes were burned to death without being, like Huss and Jerome, much spoken of), they kept their ground until late in the 15th century.[2] That was the date of the *Hussite* commotion which likewise spread over Germany from another quarter. The Hussites, no less than the Moravians and the brotherhoods to which they gave birth, exhibited a lively zeal in the propagation of their principles. They had emissaries in all parts of Germany,[3] and we know in particular that when Luther's fame began to spread, they sent deputies to wait upon him. The minds of men were at the time susceptible of impressions of the sort, and hence, in the course of the 15th century, we find the doctrines and principles of Huss springing up in many quarters of Germany.

From various causes,[4] *Franconia* became a principal seat of these free movements. Here at a very early period we find

[1] *Röhrig* die Gottesfreunde und Winkeler am Oberrhein, in Illgens Zeitschrift für hist. Theol. 1840. Heft. i. s. 122.

[2] *Hagen* Deutschlands lit. und relig. Verhältnisse im Ref. Zeitalter, B. i. s. 20. 66 ff.

[3] *Gieseler* K. Gesch. B. 2. Abth. 4. s. 479. Anmerk. i.

[4] *Hagen* in a. l. s. 164 ff.

the Waldenses and Friends of God. Even prior to Huss, and about the year 1342, a laymah, called Conrad *Hager* in Wurtzburg, publicly impugned the sacrifice of the Mass and the similar institutions which ministered to the cupidity of the clergy.[1] *Huss* himself entered Franconia on his journey to Constance, and was well received, especially at *Nuremberg*.[2] In *Bamberg* so strong was the leaning to the heretical opinions, that the Council found it necessary to restrain the citizens by oath from embracing them.[3] In Aischgrunde and Taubergrunde, about 1446, a certain Frederick *Müller* preached the doctrines of Huss, and found numerous adherents among the people.[4] Above all, however, the impression produced in this district, at a somewhat later period, by a certain peasant boy whom they called "the drummer," was very remarkable. About the middle of the 15th century, at the village of Niklashausen, in the diocese of Wurtzburg, there appeared a poor and illiterate peasant youth, called *John Behem*,[5] pretending to be acting by the command of the Holy Virgin, who, he said, had revealed herself to him, in white raiment, as he fed his flock, and had communicated to him certain doctrines congenial alike with those of the Hussites, and with those which afterwards laid the foundation of the peasant-war. He vehemently rebuked the corruption of the clergy, especially their avarice, pride, and licentious manner of life, and threatened them with the impending judgments of God. He rejected tithes, and contended that all taxes should be paid voluntarily and for God's sake. He spoke against the jurisdiction of the Church, and the obligatory force of the commands of priests. He insisted that all road-money,[6] tolls, servitudes,[7] and other oppressive burdens, claimed by spiritual and temporal superiors, should be done away,

[1] Ibid. s. 169.

[2] *Theobalds* Hussitenkrieg, Nürnb. 1621. Th. 1. s. 40 ff.

[3] *Hellers* Bamberg. Reform. Gesch. Bamb. 1825. s. 11.

[4] *Hagen* in a. l. s. 169, 170. *Gropp.* Annal. T. ii. p. 112.

[5] The history of this remarkable man is fully detailed in D'Argentré Collectio Judicior. de nov. erroribb. T. i. pars 2. p. 288—290, and in a German narrative in manuscript from the 15th century, contained in the collection above alluded to, as in the College Library at Bonn. Hist. Ordin. relig. Nro. 466. b. See as regards him an *Appendix*.

[6] pedagia. See Ducange s. v. pedagium. T. iii. p. 248.

[7] precariae exactiones. See Ducange s. v. Precaria. T. iii. p. 448.

and, on the other hand, insisted that hunting and fishing, and the free use of the forests, should be common to every Christian man, without distinction, whether rich or poor, peasant, bishop, or prince. It is true that Rudolph of Wurtzburg soon put a stop to the harangues which the shepherd lad was accustomed to deliver, on fields and meadows, from the windows of farm-houses, and even from the branches of trees. He caused him to be apprehended in 1475, and miserably burnt to death, but the youth had already scattered seed among the people, who reverenced him as a saint, and flocked to hear him in inconceivable crowds from Franconia, Bavaria, Suabia, Hesse, Thuringia, Saxony, and Meissen,[1] and ere long that seed struck root, and ripened into a bloody harvest in the war of the peasantry.

But to a much greater distance, as far even as the *Neckar* and the *Rhine*, the same principles were early scattered. In a Bull, emitted against the Council of Basle in the year 1431, Eugene IV. insists upon the fact, that in and around that town, the people were infected with the Hussite heresy. To *Heidelberg Jerome of Prague*, Huss's friend, had paid a visit in 1436,[2] and there posted up a list of propositions, among which there was one denying the doctrine of transubstantiation.[3] Shortly after, John *Draendorf*, or von Schlieben,[4] also laboured in this district. He was of a noble Saxon family, and had received ordination at

[1] Tanta multitudo hominum, non solum ex Francia ipsa Orientali (Franconia), sed etiam ex Bavaria et Suevia, ex Alsatia et partibus Rheni, ex Wetteraugia, ex Hassia, ex Buchonia, ex Thuringia, ex Saxonia et Missnia, quotidie ad miserandum Fatuellum hunc turmatim fluebat, ut frequenter uno die 10,000 hominum, aliquando 20,000 nonnunquam etiam triginta millia convenisse apud villulam Niclaushausen sit proditum. In D'Argentré p. 288. The number may be somewhat exaggerated, still that a very large throng came to this place is not to be doubted.

[2] Comp. Hist. Univers. Heidelb. mscr. p. 43. *Struve* Pfälz. Kirch-. Hist. s. 2.

[3] *Raynaldus* Gesch. des Const. Conc. Th. 3. s. 340. v. der Hardt Acta Conc. Const. iv. 645 sqq.

[4] With respect to this J. Draendorf (called by Luther Dramsdorf, by Melancthon Drandorff) comp. *Kapp* Nachlese von Ref. Urkunden Th. 3. s. 13. and s. 38—60, where the trial by the Inquisition is detailed, and *Beesenmeyer* in the theol. Studd. und Kritt. 1828. H. 2. s. 399, where the passages of Luther and Melancthon, which refer to him, are cited.

Prague. For reasons unknown to us, he came to Weinsberg, and called upon the citizens to defy the Papal interdict, which had been issued against them. For that offence, however, and for recommending the use of the sacrament under both species, he was apprehended at Heilbronn, arraigned before a Court of Inquisition[1] at Heidelberg, and condemned to be burnt to death. He suffered at Worms upon the 3rd of February 1425. The same fate befel Peter *Turnau*[2] in 1426 at Speyer, and also Frederick *Reiser*, commonly called Tunauer,[3] in 1458, at Strasburg. The latter was at first probably a disciple of Tauler, or one of the "Friends of God," but during an imprisonment in Bohemia had imbibed the doctrine of the Hussites, and was consecrated one of their priests. He preached this doctrine in clandestine meetings of adherents at Wurtzburg, Heilbronn, Pforzheim, Basle, and *Strasburg*. In the last of these towns he was tracked by the Dominicans and brought to the stake. Of his numerous followers at Strasburg, both male and female, some shared his fate, and some were banished. Among others, his patroness, Anna Weiler, an old lady engaged in mercantile pursuits, died along with him.

We thus see, that there was in these districts ample opportunity of connexion with the Hussites and their doctrines, and from what appears at the trial of *Wesel*, and indeed, according to his own acknowledgment, there can be no doubt, that he had

[1] It consisted principally of Heidelberg professors, among whom John of Frankfort is specially mentioned.

[2] *Flacius* Cat. test. Verit. ii. 853. edit. Francof. 1556.

[3] Properly Donauer (Danubianus), because he was born in the district of the Danube (at Deutach). The original records of his trial, in the year 1457, are still extant in Strasburg. In the work "Tutschland," written by Jacob *Wimpheling* (1501), and published at Strasburg in 1648 by Joh. Mich. *Moscherosch*, the author mentions, in the chapter entitled "What things ought to be punished from a regard to the service of God," as among the meritorious actions of former citizens of Strasburg, that "in defence of the Papal chair, they had burned to death, a certain leader of heretics, called Frederick *Tunawer*, for speaking ill of the donation of Constantine, and had condemned and sentenced several of his followers, partly to death and partly to exile in the year 1458." *Jung* in his journal Timotheus Strasburg 1821. Th. 2. *Röhrichs* Gesch. der Ref. im. Elsass. Th. 1. s. 35. and dissertation by the same author, über die Gottesfreunde und Winkeler bei Illgen 1840, 1. s. 160.

held intercourse with one of their emissaries, a certain *Nicolaus of Bohemia,* (or Poland). It is not, however, probable[1] that this intercourse was, either solely or principally, the cause of the Inquisitorial proceedings, partly, because the point does not appear with sufficient prominence in the foreground of the trial itself, and partly because there were other and more notorious things in the writings, and especially the discourses of *Wesel,* available as grounds for instituting a process against him. His connexion with the Hussites, like that with the Jews, was probably taken advantage of merely to furnish a nickname, readily intelligible to the multitude, and calculated at once to excite dark suspicions in their minds. In spite of the spread of their views, a Hussite was a name still generally hated and feared. The mention of it instantly conjured up the idea of a blazing pile. Even *Luther,* free although he was from prejudice, at first repudiated all fellowship with the sect and their doctrine; for, when accused by Eck, in the disputation at Leipsic, in the same way as *Wesel* was, of abetting the Hussite heresy, he called his opponent for his pains an "insolent and malicious sophist," and having in the course of the dispute admitted that among the Hussite doctrines there were some really Christian and evangelical, this so incensed Duke George, that he exclaimed "The man is mad."

Several *theologians of the school of Thomas* are mentioned[2] as taking the lead in preferring the accusation against *Wesel* before *Diether von Isenburg,* the Archbishop of Mayence. This prelate,[3] who had been forced to expiate his own intrepid opposition to the Romish see, by the military devastation of his capital, showed no disposition to expose himself and his bishopric to fresh dangers for the sake of a single daring preacher.[4] He entered into the proposal, and made the necessary preparations,

[1] As *Gieseler* also observes, K. Gesch. B. 2. s. 481. Anmerk. o.

[2] Examen. magistr. at the very beginning, instigantibus, imo cogentibus Thomistis quibusdam.

[3] Compare respecting him, the monography, *Diether von Isenburg,* Archbishop of Mayence. Frankf. 1792. 2 Theile.

[4] Exam. magistr. p. 292: veritus, ne denuo ab episcopatu ejiceretur.

by inviting theologians from Cologne and Heidelberg to help to constitute a court of inquisition, before which *Wesel* was to be arraigned. The Archbishop's letter of invitation, dated Mayence, 17th Jan. 1479, to the *University of Heidelberg*, towards which the prelate had already shewn other marks of special confidence,[1] is still extant in manuscript,[2] and I shall here give the most important and characteristic passages. After alluding to the obligation he lay under to endeavour to preserve the purity of the Lord's vineyard, the prince-bishop proceeds: "We have recently perused some writings from the pen of *John of Wesel*, Professor of Theology, and, for many proofs and reasons, could not help regarding them with suspicion. They attack the articles of our religion, and with so much bitterness, that it seems to me improper to pass them in silence. For this reason, we have caused the aforesaid *John of Wesel* to be apprehended and kept in decent custody, and there to await our further deliberations, and as he is obstinate in what he says and asserts, we appoint a legal investigation to be made into his religious opinions, that they may be ascertained. At the same time, as he is a person of great subtilty,[3] we need the help of some men well-versed in Holy Scripture, and of sound judgment and discretion. In such your University abounds, and therefore we earnestly entreat and exhort you, for the sake of religion, to send to our city of Mayence, upon the 3d of February ensuing, several well-instructed divines, that they may be present at the examination of the said *Dr John*, upon the following day, and that their learning may help and promote the refutation of his errors." The Archbishop has no doubt of the willingness of the University to comply with his wishes, and thereby respond to the special favour which on his part he had always shewn to it, and he concludes with requesting an answer. This answer the *University* returned on the 23d January 1479, and, as might be expected, cheerfully complied with the Electoral Archbishop's request. In the name of the Rector and the whole body, it extols[4] the excellent prelate for his zeal in preserving the purity of the faith, and then proceeds as follows: "Although your Highness has already acquired distinction by

[1] Hist. Univers. Heidelb. mscr. p. 54. [2] Ibid. s. 82.
[3] propter hominis illius argutias.
[4] Hist. Univ. Heidelb. mscr. p. 83.

the general success of your government, the zeal you show in voluntarily and instantaneously hastening to encounter daring enemies, deserves, in a particular manner, the highest honour, unbounded praise, and immortal glory; and if, in general, your great and fatherly heart can cherish no wish, to which we are not ready at once, and to the utmost of our poor ability to respond, so especially do we promise, for the sake of the Church's glory, merit, and usefulness, to comply with this so holy and salutary wish, and to send to you the men you request. Not merely in this matter, however, but in every other agreeable to your Majesty,[1] and which does not exceed our abilities, will you find us at all times and in the highest degree willing to serve you." In fact, on the day appointed, the University despatched three of her divines, the Doctors *Nicolaus of Wachenheim*, *Herwig of Amsterdam*, and *Jodocus of Calw*,[2] accompanied by several of the Masters. After a similar correspondence with the Archbishop, the University of *Cologne* did the same, delegating the Dominicans and Inquisitors, Master *Gerard von Elten* and Master *Jacob Sprenger*, and a third person of the same order.[3] The process could therefore commence in due form.

Before entering upon the narration of it, however, we crave permission to say a word or two respecting the chief actors. The one of most exalted rank, though certainly not the best qualified for such an affair, was Archbishop *Diether* himself. Possessed of energy and patriotism, he was yet no theologian, and of slender attainments in any branch of learning.[4] The position he held in the Church, and the relation in which he stood to the Romish see, deterred him from actually interesting himself *in Wesel's favour*. At the same time, his better convictions must equally have restrained the man who had been the early friend and protector of Heimburg, the advocate of the principles of the Councils of Constance and Basle, and the champion of the

[1] The University employs towards the Elector not only the expressions, Celsitudo et Dominatio, but also Majestas vestra.

[2] Exam. magistr. p. 298.

[3] Ibid.

[4] It was said of him what at that time was highly disparaging, that he could not speak two words of Latin. *Schröckh* R. Gesch. Th. 32. s. 269.

rights of the German nation against the claims of Rome, from acting with zeal *against* him. He was accordingly passive in the transaction, attended the sederunts, lent the court the sanction of his authority, subordinated himself to the Inquisitors, and repeatedly entertained the parties engaged in the trial at his table. Neither do any of the archbishops, clergy, and councillors, or of the members of the University of Mayence, appear to have come prominently forward on the occasion. The active promoters of the inquest were the commissioners from the two Universities of Cologne and Heidelberg. These evidently shared the business between them, the delegates from *Cologne*, consonantly with the whole character of their University, taking chiefly the inquisitorial part, and leaving to those of *Heidelberg*, the scientific. The main burthen devolved upon the Dominican, *Gerard von Alten*, who discharged the office of Inquisitor, and conducted the examination. According to the character given him by *Trithemius*,[1] and which is probably too favourable, as during the trial he certainly showed no great proof of erudition, he was a learned and acute theologian, well versed in Scripture and philosophy, had long filled a professor's chair in the University of Cologne, and becoming weary of the world, had retired from it into the Dominican order, where he was soon appointed to the office of an Inquisitor. With him as junior colleague was associated Jacob *Sprenger*, who had been raised to the same office by Innocent VIII. This person has left to posterity no other evidence of the theological erudition, for which *Trithemius* gives him credit,[2] except the authorship of the so-called "Hammer of Witchcraft," *i.e.*, a form of process for the trial of witches, a work which is said to belong in common[3] to him and another Inquisitor, Henry Institoris, the two original founders of trial for witchcraft in Germany. Among the Hiedelberg theologians, the most eminent was *Nicolaus of Wachenheim*,[4] a man who had now reached an advanced stage of life, and been

[1] *Trithemius* de scriptor. eccles. c. 845. p. 201.

[2] Ibid. cap. 957. p. 229.

[3] *Trithemius* ibid. *Altamurae* Biblioth. Dominicana p. 205 and 215. *Schröckh* K. Gesch. B. 30. s. 474 and 477.

[4] See respecting him *Trithemius* de script. eccl. c. 864. p. 206. We shall say more of him in the sequel, when speaking of Wessel's sojourn at Heidelberg.

for nearly fifty years a professor at Heidelberg. He was a skilful scholastic, and zealous theologian, and the sole member of the court who, like *Wesel* himself, belonged to the party of the Nominalists.[1] Of his two colleagues, *Jodocus of Calw* is the only one with whom we have any particular acquaintance. *Trithemius* pictures him,[2] as we have already seen, as a learned theologian and a man of great activity of mind. All of these persons decidedly held the principles of the Church, some of them in a narrow, others in a more enlarged and philosophic spirit. They had the advantages of learning, of judicial station, of the support of the civil power, and they were appointed for the purpose, not of dealing kindly with an erring brother, but of silencing and judging a heretic.

Before them was arraigned *John Wesel*, now old, infirm, and bent with many a cross, *a truly afflicted man.* In his better days of youth and vigour he had uttered the beautiful words:[3] "Let the flesh be beaten to pieces and the old man suffer affliction; let the body of sin die, that the spirit may be saved and the new man rise again; let the rod of correction smite; but do thou, O Lord, grant courage to bear it; let waves of temptation break in, but do thou give strength to surmount them; let persecutions arise, but do thou send victory from heaven." Now, however, when persecution had actually arisen, it must be confessed, he did not exhibit all the bravery which we love and admire in a determined confessor of the truth.[4] The courage, which, like *Wesel's*, mounts on certain occasions to presumption, is also apt on others to sink into timidity. It is painful to see men who know better yielding unconvinced to mere power. But instances of the kind do unfortunately occur in the history of the Church's despotism, amidst opposite examples of lofty and shining faith and fortitude. And although we must not draw a veil over them, still it is our duty to judge

[1] He is described, Exam. magistr. p. 298. as, solus *de via* (ut dicunt) *Modernorum.*

[2] De script. eccl. c. 873. p. 208.

[3] De auctorit. officio et potest. Pastorum, p. 161.

[4] *Walch* Monim. med. aev. ii. 1. Praef. p. liii. calls *Joh. of Wesel* a *Confessor*; but scarcely with truth, according to the ancient signification of the word.

them humanely, especially when accompanied with such palliations as are found in the case of *Wesel*. It is evident, from his letter to the Bishop, that he had already endured innumerable vexations. He was old and weary, and reduced by sickness to extreme debility. He had no wish to return back to life, but only to be allowed to die in peace. He declared that his judges had failed to convince him, but, induced by the persuasions of well-wishers, who took the responsibility upon their consciences, and probably also by the request of the Elector, who would certainly have been grieved to see the old man committed to the flames, he made what appears a very general recantation, and submitted to the Church.

It is time, however, to enter on the *trial itself*, and we shall relate it at considerable length, as scarcely a case could be found furnishing more satisfactory materials for forming a full and correct conception of a proceeding of the kind. There are extant two narratives of this Inquisitory process, from the pen of eye-witnesses, one which has been printed, and one which still continues in manuscript.[1] Both of them are by unknown authors, but both present us with a very lively picture of the scene, bear generally the impression of truth and fidelity in the details, and perfectly agree with each other in the main circumstances. They differ only in the following points: The *printed report*, drawn up by one of the members, probably, of the University of Heidelberg, is more exact in its statements of the facts and the names of the persons. It gives at the commencement a collection of paradoxes from the sermons of *Wesel*, and at the end, a variety of judgments passed upon him, and in general, it contains more specific and characteristic traits of what several of the parties did and said. Frequently, too, it is written in a lively, but at the same time

[1] The *printed* Narrative which Ortuinus Gratius previously published, is to be found in *D'Argentré* Collect. judicior. de nov. error. Paris. 1728. T. i. P. ii. p. 291—298. The *unprinted* is in a volume of promiscuous writings in the College Library at *Bonn*, under the Rubric, Hist. Ordin. religios. Nro. 466 b. Besides this original, I am indebted to the kindness of the Consistorial-Councillor *Bruch*, in Cologne, for the copy I have now before me.

also a ruder style. The *unprinted report*, which rather resembles a protocol, and which, as we may infer from the marked distinction it confers upon *Gerard von Elten*,[1] was probably drawn up by some one from *Cologne*, is more full in reporting what was spoken, begins at once with the examination, abstains from the expression of any personal opinion, is written in somewhat better Latin, and only here and there gives those individual and characteristic traits which so agreeably fill up the printed report. In the following narrative we shall found upon the first report, and at the proper places introduce, as annotations, or in parenthetic clauses, supplementary matter from the second.

On *Friday* the 8th of February,[2] the parties connected with the process met for the first time in consultation.[3] There were present all the doctors and masters from Heidelberg, the Archbishop's suffragan, the Vicar Count of Wertheim, the Custos Count of Solms, the two canons Breitenbach and Macarius, the Minister of Frankfort,[4] the Rector and Dean of the Faculty of Arts in the University of Mayence, and several other prelates and councillors of the Archbishop. They settled the course of procedure, and resolved that Master *Wesalia* should be sworn to deliver up all and every one of the writings and tracts of which he was the author, in order that he might be convicted by his own words. The Count of Wertheim, the Archbishop's Fiscal, Michael Heim, the Dean of the church of St Victor, and a notary, were appointed to administer the oath. The Heidelberg doctors, with three others, viz., the Canon Macarius, the Dean of St Victor, and a third, were appointed to peruse the writings, extract from them the errors, and arrange these in a list. Meanwhile the Masters Elten and Sprenger arrived from Cologne, and among them, also, the writings were distributed for the purpose of extracting the heresies.

The very next day, *Saturday*, the doctors of Heidelberg and Cologne presented their extracts to the Archbishop. There was, however, no summary of them, and therefore he did not inspect

[1] He is *e.g.* at the very beginning, p. 1, called Theologus egregius.
[2] Feria sexta post Purificationem.
[3] Printed account in D'Argentré s. 292.
[4] He is called, without specifying his name, Plebanus Frankfordiensis through the whole narrative.

them.[1] The doctors also formally proposed that Master Gerard Elten should act as Inquisitor, and the Archbishop accepted his credentials. After further appointing the time and place for the examination, viz. that it was to proceed on Monday at the convent of the Minorites, where *Wesel* was in custody, the whole doctors, with the masters from Heidelberg,[2] dined at the Archbishop's.

On *Monday* the 11th Feb. at seven in the morning, the Archbishop, the Inquisitor, all the doctors and masters from Cologne and Heidelberg, the Rector and Dean of the Faculty of Arts, with many other members of the University of Mayence, the canons and doctors, the Archbishop's Councillors and Chancellor, the prelates and students, the suffragan, the minister of Frankfort, the fiscal and beadles, met, in the refectory of the Minorites, for the *examination of Wesel.* The Inquisitor occupied the highest seat, the Archbishop the next, and then the rest in their order. Before commencing, the Inquisitor spake as follows:—"Most reverend father, and honoured doctors! The present meeting has been called by our venerable father the Elector, for the purpose of hearing what Master John *Wesel* has to say touching certain opinions he is suspected of holding on articles of the Catholic faith. I shall begin, however, by pleading in his favour. I have therefore to request, that two or three who are favourably disposed towards him, and any others who please, will take in hand to admonish him to renounce his errors, return to a better mind, and sue for mercy. If he ask mercy he shall obtain it, but if he will not ask it, we shall proceed without mercy."[3] Thereupon the suffragan Macarius, and the minister of Frankfort, were commissioned for the purpose. They remained, however, so long absent, that the Inquisitor despatched the Fiscal to recall them, and to say that Master John *Wesel* must present himself personally, and express his gratitude for the offer of mercy. But just as the Fiscal was on the point of departing, the three commissioners made their

[1] Praesul, it is there said, p. 292, *nihil eorum inspexit,* quia in unum non erant redacti. We see from this how indifferent Diether was to the whole affair.

[2] I look upon one of these, to whom it so expressly alludes, to have been the author of the printed narrative.

[3] Unprinted account, "He will then find mercy without mercy."

appearance, and introduced, according to his own request, Master John himself.

John Wesel then came forward between two Minorites, pale, looking like a corpse, and with a staff in his hand.[1] A place in the centre of the circle,[2] exactly opposite the Archbishop and Inquisitor, was pointed out for him to sit down upon the floor. The Inquisitor then addressed to him in person the offer of mercy. Whereupon *Wesel* was about to reply, and commence a full protestation and defence, but he was interrupted by Master Gerard, who told him to be *brief* in what he said, and to declare at once whether he meant still to adhere to his opinions, or was willing to subject himself to the decision of the Church. *Wesel* replied, that he had never taught anything contrary to the decisions of the Church, and that if in his writings he had erred or said what was wrong, he was willing to recant, and to do whatever was right. On this the Inquisitor enquired, "Do you then ask mercy?" to which *Wesel* rejoined, "Why should I ask mercy, having as yet been convicted of no crime, fault, or error?" "Well," said the Inquisitor, "we shall recall it to your remembrance, and commence the examination." Meanwhile other members of the court joined in exhorting *Wesel* to sue for mercy, and at last he did utter the words, "I ask for mercy." But the Inquisitor nevertheless proceeded with the examination. As a preliminary step, he caused his own credentials to be read by the notary, and *John of Wesel* to be formally cited before his tribunal, and he also commanded him, on pain of excommunication, simply to answer the questions, and to speak the truth without evasion or sophistry. The notary of the Archbishop was also sworn faithfully to take down what was said, and two persons were appointed as witnesses of the trial. Whereupon the *proceedings* commenced.

The first question asked of *Wesel* by the Inquisitor was, "If he believed himself bound by the oath he had sworn to speak the truth, though contrary to his own or another's interest?" *Wesel:* "I *know* it." Inquisitor: "Say, I *believe* it." *Wesel* "What is

[1] . . . pallidus, silicernius, habens baculum in manu. Let the reader reflect on what *Wesel* had endured prior to his apprehension, and during his long imprisonment.

[2] It is expressly said, locatus est ad medium *in terra*.

the use of saying I *believe* it, when the fact is that I *know* it." This irritated the Inquisitor, who with a sharp accent exclaimed "Master John, Master John, Master John, say I believe, say I believe it." *Wesel* answered "I *believe* it."

Secondly, being interrogated if he believed that by the fact of not speaking what he was convinced to be the truth, he at once rendered himself liable to the penalty of excommunication, and committed a mortal sin, he replied, first, "I know it," and then, "I believe it."

3. Being interrogated, Whether he had written a treatise on The nature of the obligation of human laws, to a certain *Nicolaus of Bohemia* or Poland, and whether he was the author of several treatises on the Spiritual power, Indulgences, Fasting, and other subjects? *Wesel* believes that he did write these works, and that he showed them to many scholars, and in particular that he had sent the work on Fasting to the Bishop of Worms.

4. Interrogated, Whether he had held intercourse with the aforesaid *Nicolaus* in his own house or elsewhere, and how often? *Wesel* believes and acknowledges that he has often conversed with that person on the subject of medicine, and of taking the communion under both species, and that he had done this at Mayence, adding that he had *refuted Nicolaus* out of the Gospel.

5. Interrogated, Whether he had written other tracts or letters to any one, and in particular to *Bohemians* or other schismatics or heretics? The defendant believes that he has not done so.

6. Interrogated, Whether he had ever received treatises or letters from *Bohemians* or any other *heretics*, and whether he believes their doctrines, patronizes them, or is their Bishop? *Wesel* avers that it is not the fact.

7. Interrogated, Whether he had ever taught or preached that the Scriptures do not say that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son, and what he does believe upon this point? *Wesel* confesses that he had written, but declares that he had never preached, to that effect, and that he does not believe that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son as one and the same principle, because in his opinion this cannot be proved from Scripture.

8. Interrogated, Whether he believes in one Holy Catholic

and Apostolic Church, and whether he had ever written or preached anything against it? Likewise if he believes or has written or preached that the clause, *Nam sicut anima rationalis*,[1] &c., has been improperly inserted in the Athanasian creed? *Wesel* believes in the one Holy Church, never intentionally wrote any thing against it, but certainly considers the clause referred to to be spurious.

9. Interrogated, Whether he considers the Church to be Christ's spouse, and governed by the Holy Spirit? Certainly.

10. Interrogated, Whether he believes or has written or preached that the *Church is fallible* in articles of faith and things necessary for salvation? He answered, the Church of *Christ* cannot err; but is informed that he had written the contrary.

11. Interrogated, Whether he believes that the *Romish Church* is the head of all others, and that the faith which it confesses and maintains is the true faith delivered by Christ? This *Wesel* believes.

12. Interrogated, Whether he believes that the *Bishop of Rome* is the true vicar of Christ upon earth, and that it is necessary for the Church to have a head,[2] or that synods and assemblies[3] of priests are sufficient (to wit for the government of the Church)? He does believe that the Bishop of Rome is Christ's vicar, and that a head is necessary for the Church.

13. Interrogated, Whether he believes that the *Pope*, when he *sins*,[4] forfeits the use of his power and jurisdiction? He does not believe this.

14. Interrogated, Whether he believes, or has written or preached, that the Apostles received no authority from Christ

[1] The article of the Athanasian creed here referred to is, Nam sicut anima rationalis et caro unus est homo, ita et deus et homo unus est Christus. That *Wesel* taught what was contrary to the standards of the Church or heretical respecting *the Person of Christ*, we have no evidence. The question whether Christ was nailed or bound to the Cross, which afterwards occurs, is no proof to the contrary. The whole matter amounts to only a critical doubt, as to the originality of that passage in the creed.

[2] Praesidentem—the expression is used in both narratives.

[3] Conventus et congregationes.

[4] Papa peccator.

to legislate for the Church? He confesses that he has preached and written that this is not said in the Gospel, and that he does not believe that the Apostles received any such authority.

15. Interrogated, Whether he believes, or has written, or preached, that the Pope, Emperor, or other princes and prelates have no plenary power to enact laws binding on the consciences of their subjects, unless with the subjects' assent—that subjects assenting to any particular law thereby pledged themselves to keep it, and that only when they trespass against a law to which they have so assented, are they transgressors and guilty of mortal sin? *Wesel* believes that the laws do not require the assent of subjects, and that the ordinances of the Church are obligatory upon those who would avoid mortal sin. On this article, however, he wavered.[1]

16. Interrogated, Whether he believes, and has written or preached, that every priest is substantially a bishop, and that the difference between the two is merely nominal? He believes that there is a difference[2] between a bishop and a priest.

17. Interrogated, Whether he believes, and has written or preached, that no Christian, even the most learned, has authority to interpret the words of Christ? Likewise, whether he believes that, in interpreting the Scriptures the holy Fathers and Doctors received the aid of the same Holy Spirit by whom, according to the faith, the Scriptures were delivered and revealed? The first article *Wesel* considers false, and he does not believe the second.

18. Interrogated, Whether he believes, and has written or preached that children, although conceived in their mother's womb, are yet without original sin? *Wesel* certainly believes this.

19. Interrogated, Whether he believes that in the holy Sacrament of the altar, Christ is really and sacramentally contained, or that he is merely there in the way in which God is present in every place, by virtue of his essential being and power? And whether he believes that in the sacrament the very substance of the bread, or its substantial form,[2] remains, or that after the con-

[1] varius tamen fuit ad istum Articulum.

[2] credit differentiam esse—the expression is very ambiguous, and admits of several senses.

[3] In the unprinted account, formam sacramentalem.

secration the whole Christ, his body, blood, and deity, is present under the form of the bread, and that he is so likewise under that of the wine? He believes this, but believes likewise that the body of Christ may exist under the form of the bread, although the substance of the bread remain.

20. Interrogated, Whether he had preached in Wiesbaden or elsewhere, that whoever sees the holy sacrament of the altar, sees the Devil? He does not believe it. And being likewise asked by the Inquisitor,[1] When he had last confessed, read the Mass, and received the Supper? (*Wesel* appeared, from age and weakness, scarcely capable of officiating in the Mass.) He replied that he had last confessed on Christmas eve, and even received the sacrament, and likewise, that he considered that every Christian was bound to confess and take the communion once a year.

21. Interrogated, Whether he believes that abstinence is imposed by law upon the clergy of the Western Church, or that they are bound to chastity, and likewise, whether they are obliged to keep the seven canonical hours? He believes that the law binds them to both.

22. Interrogated, Whether he had preached to monks, nuns, or Beguines, that they were not bound by the vow of chastity or by any other vow? and whether he had asserted that the Monastic state is not favourable to salvation, or had said to the Minorites: "I cannot think you will be saved in your state?" *Wesel* believes that Monastics are bound by their vows. He may have said, "that it is not by Monachism, but by the grace of God, that we are saved."[2] He also considers the Monastic life to be a way of salvation, and added, If they are not saved, who then shall be so?

23. Interrogated, Whether he had ever said to a priest at Coblentz or to any other person, that he might cohabit with a woman without sin? He denies that he ever did.

24. Interrogated, Whether he believes or has written that there are no kinds of mortal sin, except those which are designated

[1] This happened at the commencement of the examination, but is introduced here as kindred matter by the author.

[2] According to the unprinted account, Religio (Monachism) nullum salvat sine gratia Dei.

as such in the Bible? *Wesel* certainly does believe this, and will believe it till better taught.

25. Interrogated, Whether he had preached to the people that it is doubtful whether Christ was bound with cords, or fastened with nails[1] to the cross? He confesses having said that in the history of the passion nothing is stated for certain upon the matter. He believes, however, that he was nailed.

26. Interrogated, Whether he has met with persons who embraced or favoured these and other of his opinions? *Wesel* declares that he has not.

27. Interrogated, Whether he believes that the Indulgences of the Church are efficacious? what in general his opinion respecting Indulgence is? and whether he had written a treatise upon the subject? He ackowledges that he had written such a treatise, and believes what is therein contained.

28. In fine, being interrogated respecting the vice-gerency of Christ upon earth, he answers that he does not believe that Christ has left any vice-gerent, and appeals for proof to what Christ himself said, when about to leave the world, "Lo, I am with you always," inasmuch as these words distinctly intimate that he did not intend to appoint any one as his substitute.[1] If a vicar signifies one who in the master's absence is to perform his work, then Christ has no vicar upon earth.

At the close of the examination, *Wesel* was led back to prison. The Archbishop, the Inquisitor, and the doctors, then resolved to appoint a committee to advise what further steps should be taken, and for that purpose nominated the doctors of Heidelberg and Cologne, the Chancellors of the Archbishop and the Count Palatine George Pfeffer and Thomas Dornberg, the Suffragan, the Rector of the University of Mayence, and the canons Count of Solms and Macarius, the Fiscal and two notaries. After dinner they held a sederunt at two o'clock, and settled the procedure for the following day.

On *Tuesday* morning, the same parties, as on the day before, met again in the Monastery of the Minorites, and on this occasion, the laity were indiscriminately admitted and no one refused. *Wesel*

[1] The unprinted account adds, "because it is his will to be present and do every thing himself."

was brought forward, and the Inquisitor informed the Court that there were three things which they had that day to do. First, to propose afresh to the panel certain articles to which his answers on the previous day had not been sufficiently precise;[1] secondly, to ask him certain questions which were not asked the day before; and, thirdly, to learn from him once more, whether he meant to adhere to, or to depart from what he had yesterday said. The oath having been again administered, the following *additional articles*[2] were taken down.

Interrogated respecting his Treatise on Indulgences, he believes that the treasure of good works cannot be distributed by the Pope, because no such treasure has been left upon the earth, inasmuch as Scripture declares of departed saints, "That their works do follow them." Likewise he believes, that there is no commutation of the penalties due on account of sin, for the sufferings of Christ and the saints, because the merits of the latter are not transferable, so as to be satisfactory for others, and hence it is not in the power of the Pope or any prelate, to distribute to others the treasure containing them. Moreover, he does not believe that his treatise contains the statement that "Indulgences are not remissions of the penalties imposed by law or human authority for sins, and consequently that such remissions usually termed Indulgences, are a pious fraud upon believers." In like manner, he does not believe, that his treatise contains any such article as the following: "That the Church grants Indulgences, is a proposition only true of that Church which is fallible, and, therefore, by granting them, the Church does more harm than good."

Being further interrogated, what are his sentiments respecting the consecration and benediction of altars and cups, church ornaments, lights, palms, herbs, holy water, and other inanimate objects? He believes that there is no virtue in them to drive away evil spirits, or to effect the forgiveness of venal sins; He likewise believes, that holy water has no more efficacy than other and common water.

[1] Printed account: non satis resolutus. Unprinted: non satis recollectus.

[2] These come in the unprinted account after the repetition of the articles of the previous day.

Further, with respect to marriage and degrees of consanguinity, he believes that the Pope has no power of dispensation as respects the degrees forbidden in the Old Testament, but that he has that power as respects those forbidden by the New Law; likewise that believers are under obligation to abstain in the forbidden cases, if they would avoid mortal sin.

In fine, he avows his belief in the following articles: It is in the power of God to impart his grace to any one who has the use of reason, without the motion of his free will. One instance of this is the Apostle Paul. He did nothing by his free-will for his conversion. It is solely by the grace of God, that the elect are saved. Nothing ought to be believed which is not contained in Holy Scripture.

The *questions asked* upon the former day having been *asked again*, *Wesel* adhered in almost every instance to his previous answers, especially with reference to articles 1—6, 9—18, 20—28. On articles 7, 8, and 19, he made some additional remarks. As to article 7th, on the procession of the Holy Ghost, he believes that the clause in the Nicaean Creed, which says that the Holy Spirit proceedeth from the Father and the Son, is false, and that the words of St John, who affirms that the Spirit proceedeth from the Father, are more worthy of belief, because it may well be doubted, whether every council, though lawfully convoked, is under the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit and of Christ. He likewise believes that the doctrine of the procession of the Spirit from the Father *and* the Son, is not contained in Scripture, either as regards the words or the meaning. On the 8th article respecting the Church, he still defined it to be the fellowship of all who believe, and are united together in the bands of love. This is the true Church of Christ, and it is known to none but God. He also observed that we should not believe either in the Saints, Augustine, Ambrose, or any other, or in General Councils, but only in the Sacred Scriptures, the canon of the Bible. On the 19th article, respecting the Lord's Supper, he believes, that in the conversion of the substance of the bread into the body of Christ, the body is the prime matter and the naked substance of the matter.[1] In all other respects he adheres to his former statements.

[1] . . . . credit, quod in conversione substantiae panis in corpus Christi, corpus est materia prima, et nuda substantia materiae. See likewise the unprinted account.

The same day, in the course of the examination, he also said, "Though all forsake Christ, I, though I should do it alone, will adore him as the Son of God, and continue a Christian." To which the Inquisitor answered: "All heretics say the same, even when already fastened to the stake." As he denied having written certain statements, his own treatises, in his own handwriting, were shown him, when he could no longer persist in the denial;[1] and having on one occasion frequently repeated that he never heard such a thing, Master Gerard said to him, "You a doctor of Holy Scripture, and don't know that!" [In fine[2] the Inquisitor exhorted him in respect of his errors to ask for mercy, when the following colloquy ensued. *Wesel:* Must I ask for pardon, though I have not been convicted of guilt?—Inquisitor: You must either ask for pardon, or expect a more severe sentence; but if you ask for pardon, you will obtain it.—*Wesel:* You force me to confess and ask for pardon, and yet you have never proved me guilty.—Inquisitor: I do not force you.—*Wesel:* Yes, you do constrain me.—Inquisitor: I do neither the one nor the other, but you must of your own accord sue for pardon, and I protest against the charge you make.[3]—Other members of the court also encouraged *Wesel* to this step, and he at last said, "Well then I do ask for mercy." Upon which the Inquisitor concluded with the words, "Not so, you must come voluntarily and ask it."]

At the close of the examination,[4] *Wesel* was once more conducted to prison, and it was then determined that three of the doctors of theology, the suffragan, Herwig, and Sprenger, should be deputed to wait upon him, and amicably exhort him to renounce his errors and heretical opinions. [They were told, however, not to enter into any statement of reasons, as that would give him the opportunity of further discussion, and so the matter would never come to an end.]

[1] Refers undoubtedly to some passages in the treatise on Indulgence.

[2] All enclosed within brackets here, and in the sequel, is from the unprinted narrative.

[3] He caused his protest to be minuted.

[4] The unprinted narrative adds, "having taken time for consideration (deliberationem cepit)."

The deputies accordingly, at an early hour *on Wednesday*, met, and exhorted and dealt with him. [He replied: Ought I to act against my conscience?—The deputies: No, for the articles, as you yourself see, are false.—*Wesel:* You say so, indeed, but you do not prove it.—The deputies: No proof is necessary, for they are condemned by the Church.—*Wesel:* Of that I am not sure.—The deputies: Your uncertainty will not exempt you from punishment.] Dr Herwig also, among other things, and probably to incline him to admit the authority of the Church, asked: Why he believed in the four canonical Gospels more than in that of Nicodemus? *Wesel:* Because I choose to do so.—The deputy: But why do you believe in the four Gospels? *Wesel:* Because I have so received it from my parents.—The deputy: But why do you not believe the Fathers of the Church? *Wesel:* Because their doctrine is not canonical Scripture.—The deputy: But how can you expect that people will believe you in the pulpit, if you yourself do not believe the holy teachers? *Wesel:* I preached, but I never troubled myself whether they believed my words or not. The deputies becoming then more importunate with him, he said: "Were Christ himself to be present, and to be treated in the manner you treat me, he would be condemned as a heretic; but, he added with a smile, He would be too acute for you. [In fine, after much talk on both sides, *Wesel* declared, I will recant, *if you will take the responsibility upon your consciences.*—The deputies: That will we do, and bear all the guilt that might otherwise burden yours.—*Wesel:* If, however, I lose my wits, it is not I that do it.] After dinner at noon it was resolved next day to present to *Wesel* the chief articles which he was to recant and abjure.

Accordingly, upon *Thursday*, a list of the errors laid to his charge and a *form of recantation* were presented to him. He intimated his willingness to comply with all that was required of him, and to make his recantation, first in the refectory of the Minorites before the Bishop and Clergy, and then with due solemnity in the cathedral before the people, after notice had been given in all the other churches of the city.

On the *Friday*, about seven in the morning, the Archbishop and Inquisitor, the doctors, prelates, and many both of the clergy and laity, assembled once more. The Inquisitor delivered a

short address, in which he stated that *Wesel* was now ready to *recant*. *Wesel* was then conducted into the apartment by the Archbishop's Fiscal, and the Inquisitor thus addressed him :— "Dear Master John, you requested to have time allowed you for consideration, on the subject of your prayer for mercy, and your recantation of the several tenets on which you have been found in error, and by which you have brought a stain upon the Church and given offence to the people. Such a time for consideration you have got, and now that the present company have been called together for the purpose, you may freely say what you have in your mind." *Wesel* thereupon wished to fall upon his knees in presence of the Archbishop, and the rest of the company, but being too weak to do so, the Inquisitor called to him to keep his seat and speak on. Accordingly, after his fear and trembling had subsided, with a distinct voice, and from his inmost breast, he uttered the following words :—"Most honourable Father in Christ, Archbishop of this renowned diocese, reverend father Inquisitor, and you Doctors, Masters, and other reverend gentlemen, I voluntarily confess that errors have been found in my writings and sermons. These errors I now recant, and am also ready to recant them publicly. I submit myself to the commandments of the Holy mother Church, and to the tuition of the Doctors. I will endure the penance which has been imposed upon me, and I supplicate forgiveness and mercy."

[The Inquisitor now asked of him the following supplementary questions :—How long he had been a preacher? Answer: Seventeen years at Worms.—When he wrote the treatise upon Indulgences? Answer: At the time when the sale of Indulgences was preached, and the year before.—When he had formed his opinion respecting the Holy Ghost? *Wesel* believes that it might be about six years ago.—He then declared himself ready to recant and abjure publicly in the cathedral, and entreated that he might not again be sent to the dark and filthy prison, but allowed to occupy a decent house. The Inquisitor, however, put him off until his recantation should have been made. He would receive absolution, but till then it was not proper for him to keep company with any one. He was accordingly conducted back to the place of his previous confinement.]

The public recantation was appointed to be made on the ensu-

ing Sabbath of Estomihi, and was actually made by *Wesel*, according to the form prescribed.[1] He, no doubt, expected that he would then be fully set at liberty, and restored to his former position. In this, however, he was disappointed. Fanaticism was far from being satisfied with a mere recantation. His writings were further sentenced to be burned, and he himself, that he might be perfectly harmless, to be imprisoned for life in the Augustinian monastery at Mayence. When *Wesel* beheld his writings carried to the pile, he recollected the good which they contained, and the labour which they had cost him, and weeping bitterly, exclaimed,[2] "O thou God of mercy, must all the many good things I have written, bear the punishment due to the little that was evil? Such is not thy sentence, O thou God, who wast ready at Abraham's prayer to have spared an innumerable multitude for the sake of ten righteous persons. It is the sentence of men inflamed against me with, I know not what zeal."

From the severity of man's sentence *Wesel* was, ere long, rescued by the higher and more benignant Judge. As might have been anticipated from his great bodily infirmity, he *died* before he had spent two full years in confinement, in 1481.

If from our present position we now look back upon the trial, and *compare what Wesel then said* with what he had *formerly* asserted in his writings and sermons, we only require to put his statements into their proper place, and to discriminate correctly their right meaning, in order to see that in all essential points he remained true to himself. In the first place, he adhered firmly to his main principles; first, as respects the rule of faith, that nothing ought to be believed which is not contained in Scripture, in the canon of the Bible, and for this reason he rejected the authority of the ecclesiastical teachers, and denied that Scripture has been interpreted by the Fathers in the same spirit in which it was revealed and inspired;[3] and 2dly, as respects the subject matter of the

[1] This is also taken from the unprinted report.

[2] According to the report of *John Butzbach*, Monk at Heisterbach, (see in the sequel) in the Auctar. in libr. *Trithemii* de script. eccles. p. 79. vers.

[3] Art. 17.

faith, that only Divine grace, and not the merit of works, saves the sinner. In this sense, for example, he maintained, that even monks are not saved by Monachism, but only by grace,[1] although he admitted that their works, in as far as they are based upon grace, may be conducive to salvation. In the next place, and it is a point of material importance, neither did he betray his principles respecting the Church, the Hierarchy, and the Church's legislation. Here, however, it is particularly requisite to understand how to read between the lines and catch the true sense which he attached to his explanations. *Wesel* had always, and especially in the treatise against Indulgences, distinguished between the Church of Christ and the visible Catholic Church. The former alone was in his eyes a really Divine institution, exalted above error and defilement. The other he looked upon as a work of man, and by no means either infallible or free from defects. This distinction was upon his mind, when he gave his answers, but in place of clearly enunciating, he only hints at it. He designates, as the true Church, the communion of saints united together in love, but declares it is known only to God, or, in other words, that it is a spiritual and invisible society.[2] He could aver with perfect truth, that against this Church he had never spoken, written, or acted. With a good conscience he declared it to be the bride of Christ, animated by his spirit, and therefore elevated above all error. Within this Church, he referred all things to the one invisible head, to Christ, the living, exalted, and ever-present Son of God, and therefore, he said, that just as at the first Christ alone gave the new Law, and the Apostles had no sort of authority to enact new statutes for the Church, so does Christ still act and do all that is necessary for salvation, and needs no substitute to do for him things which he cannot himself accomplish.[3] It was perfectly consistent with this, however, for *Wesel* to recognize the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, and their relative authority and use, and to acknowledge the Pope, as the head of the visible Church, and its supreme and rightful magistrate. He did not in fact absolutely repudiate the Pope and all power ecclesiastical and temporal in

[1] Art. 22.

[2] See the repetition of the questions asked the previous day. Art. 8. Compare p. 353.

[3] Art. 28.

and of themselves, but only in so far as the one or other is repugnant to the word of God, and its laws and commandments offensive to Christian truth or charity.[1] No doubt, however, the Hierarchy, like the visible Church to which it belongs, is in his eyes not of Divine but of human origin. Holding fast this distinction, *Wesel* could assert upon the one hand, that as the Apostles had no authority to legislate for the Church,[2] as little and even less of such authority could belong to their professed successors, the Bishops: nay, more, that nothing was to be considered as a trespass against the Divine law,[3] and a mortal sin, except what was declared in Scripture to be so. On the other hand, however, as he had always inculcated obedience to magistracy of every kind, even the most tyrannical, and had characterised rebellion against them as resistance to a Divine ordinance, he could at the same time pronounce the laws of the spiritual and secular magistracy to be binding, at least humanly, even without the assent of the people,[4] and the transgression of them to be sin, and in this sense, designate as obligatory the Western Church's law of celibacy and the appointment of the seven canonical hours.[5] Of course, however, this obligatory force was in his view to be always confined within the bounds which he had elsewhere assigned to it, and never suffered to wound Christian truth and charity, nor restrain and curtail the Gospel. *Wesel* further maintained his former principles, inasmuch as he adhered to the whole substance of his treatise against Indulgences,[6] and even, on particular points, declared his opinions to be conformable to the earlier statements he had made upon this article of doctrine, although he could no longer recollect[7] some minor propositions which the treatise no doubt virtually contained; Inasmuch also as he designated to be destitute of force and meaning[8] many of the prevailing ecclesiastical usages, especially the benediction of inani-

[1] See the citations given, p. 323 and 325, from the Treatise, De auctoritate off. et pot. Pastorum.
[2] Parad. p. 291.
[3] See above, p. 323.
[4] Art. 15.
[5] Art. 21.
[6] Art. 27.
[7] The additional articles at the beginning. See p. 352.
[8] Ibid.

mate objects, which was connected with much superstition, and Finally, inasmuch as, although not decidedly denying the strict dogma of transubstantiation, he still expressed a doubt of it,[1] and hints at the form into which it was cast by Luther. The view which he held, in common with the Eastern Church, respecting the procession of the Holy Ghost, appears on the whole to be somewhat isolated, and was no doubt based solely upon his endeavour after complete conformity to Scripture. On the other hand, his opinion that original sin does not infect children still in the womb,[2] is unquestionably connected with his views of spiritual and religious development in general, and especially of the operations of grace. Holding, as *Wesel* did in the main, the principles of St. Augustine, and tracing all that is salutary and good to grace as its only source, he never could have meant to deny original sin itself, but merely its development anterior to the conscience; and his real persuasion appears to have been, that without the use of reason nobody is capable of either sin or grace, and that only a rational being can commit the one and be a recipient of the other.

So far all would have been well; for even though there might be some wavering on minor points, and perhaps even a degree of reticence, still, in the main, *Wesel*, when examined, kept himself strictly within the sphere of his convictions. But then comes the *recantation* on insufficient grounds. He himself confesses that he made it, while still imperfectly persuaded and convinced, and made it upon the authority of the mother Church, an authority which he had hitherto repudiated, and had not been induced in any effectual way to recognize. He yielded to power and devolved the responsibility upon the consciences of those who stood opposed to him as its instruments. Here—as we must not conceal—in a decisive crisis he betrayed the cause of Reformation. That cause demanded of him personally, and above everything else, an inviolable adherence to truth, that pure and strict conscientiousness, which is bound only by the word of God, and is inwardly free from all human authority and power—which, devolving nothing upon another's conscience, takes all upon its own,—which, when the purity and truth of the inward

[1] On the repetition of the 19th Art. See p. 535. [2] Art. 18.

conviction requires, is ready to go, like *Huss*, to the stake, or to say with *Luther:* "Unless persuaded by the testimony of Scripture, or upon clear and evident reason, I can and will recant nothing. Because it is neither safe nor wise to act against conscience," and which at last, when it can do nothing else, simply commits itself to the Divine aid. But if we cannot *justify* the fall of *Wesel*, especially as it was not like that of *Jerome of Prague* repaired by a subsequent and all the nobler recovery, still neither ought we to overlook what helps to *excuse* it. *Wesel's* recantation was of a very general kind. He acknowledged, as in fact every author or speaker may do, that there was erroneous matter in his writings and discourses, but without designating or repudiating particular propositions, and subjected himself, as any one may also do, to the tuition of the Doctors. Even this recantation, general though it be, was forced from him by over persuasion, and at a time when he was worn with age and broken down by bodily infirmities. In fact it was rather done for him, than a proper act of his own. And in fine, he may probably have looked upon the whole affair—though he had no right to do so—as a mere formality, with which he might comply without injury to his inward conviction. Certain it is that no material change had taken place in his mind. This was the view taken even by his adversaries, as is evident from the fact that they were not satisfied with his recantation, but in order to prevent him occasioning any trouble in future, cut him off from all intercourse with the world. In spite of these palliations, however, the *final stage of Wesel's life* continues marked with a *stain*, and the preacher of Worms before the Court of inquisition is a very different personage from *Luther*, the great hero of the faith standing—no doubt forty-two years later—before the Diet in the same city. But in fact there can be no proper comparison between a solitary and feeble old man, still conflicting with inward doubts respecting the authority of the Church and the legality of its ordinances, and the man of thirty-eight, imbued with an unparalleled strength of faith, upheld by inborn courage, supported by the assent of all the best of his countrymen, when, at a period considerably more advanced, and animated by the situation, he was permitted to stand, as champion of the faith, before the representative of the civil power, and to speak a word whose

importance was felt by all Germany, and even by the whole Christian world.

Having thus, however, exhibited without disguise the dark shades in the *portraiture of Wesel*, his occasional arrogance in controversy, and his transient timidity in danger, we may now in conclusion recall some of the *fairer features of* his character as a Christian and a man. After all, he remains one of the foremost personages of the Reformation. Less profound, sentimental, and tender than *Goch*, and inferior in genius, theological acquirement, and sagacity to *John Wessel*, he was, on the other hand, more practical than both, more zealous in his efforts to influence life around him, penetrated in a higher degree with a strong and invincible conviction of the necessity of directly modifying the state of the Church, and always ready to labour for these objects among the high and low, among friends and adversaries, by scientific disquisitions and popular paradoxes, in writing, discourse, and action. It is his honour that he consumed himself in labours like these, and if it was not given to him to take the last and crowning step, we must never forget that he had spent a long life consistently with his own beautiful apothegm, "With sobriety towards ourselves, justice towards our brethren, and piety towards God"[1]—words which, if he had had a tombstone, might with truth have been engraved upon it.

CHAPTER SECOND.

WESEL'S CONNEXION WITH THE REFORMATION. OPINIONS RESPECTING HIM. NOTICES OF HIS WRITINGS.

The *connexion of Wesel* with the *Reformation* is sufficiently obvious from what has already been said. Agreeing with *Goch* and *Wessel* in his leading tendency, his zealous endeavours to give a scriptural mould to Christian truth and practice, and in

[1] Sobrie nobis, juste fratribus, pie Deo.—De auct. officio et potest. Past. p. 146.

the stress which he laid upon the doctrine of love and grace, as taught by St Paul and Augustine, and as opposed to the prevailing doctrine of law and works, the energy of his mind impelled him to direct his chief attention to that in which the Reformation really and immediately originated, viz., hostility to Indulgences and other ordinances of the kind, as the worst of the manifestations of that doctrine of works, and in general to the whole secularized and hierarchical system of the Church. In this manner he became, if not so thorough, yet a more direct and conscious precursor of the Reformation.

His importance for the age in which he lived, and his connexion with the Reformation, may likewise be inferred from the testimonies of his cotemporaries and more immediate successors, and from the opinions delivered respecting him in later times. There is much in the judgment passed by that *eye-witness* to whom we are indebted for the printed narrative of his trial. He concludes it with the following words.[1] "If we except the single article respecting the Holy Ghost, *Wesel* seems not to have deserved so harsh a sentence, and might have escaped it, if he had been allowed a sufficient pause for reflection, and counsellors[2] with whom to advise, and if all his judges, with a single exception *(Nicolaus von Wachenheim)*, had not been Realists. Probably, too, he would have met with a more gentle, humane, and indulgent treatment, if the monks had not been instigated by a vehement zeal to triumph over a secular clergyman, especially one who did not pay due honour to their idol, Thomas Aquinas. I testify before God, the omniscient being, that these proceedings, pushed as they were to the length of a recantation, and burning of his books, excited the utmost displeasure of two learned and equitable men, Master *Engelin of Brunswick*, and Master *John Kaisersberg*.[3] Especially was Master *Engelin* of opinion that the proceedings against so distinguished a person had been

[1] In D'Argentré Collect. Judicior. T. I. P. ii. p. 298.

[2] Consultores.

[3] Both were at this time ministers in Strasburg. *Engelin*, who was eminent as a Scholastic Theologian, had previously (See above p. 278) been *Wesel's* colleague at Erfurt, and his predecessor at Mayence. The celebrated pulpit orator, *Geiler* of *Kaisersberg* († 1510) had, since 1478, been preacher in Strasburg.

too hasty. He did not scruple to maintain that many, nay even the most of *Wesel's* doctrines, were quite defensible. Neither did he conceal that the jealousy of the Thomists against the moderns, and the dislike of the monks to the secular clergy, had had much to do in the whole affair. And who, if not the devil himself, could have sowed tares like these among philosophers and theologians, by which so fierce a discord has been introduced between the parties holding different views, the disciples of Thomas, of Scotus, and Marsilius, as that one who denies the reality of universals (a Nominalist as was *Wesel)* is reckoned to have committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, and to be a heinous transgressor against God, Christianity, and the peace of society? From whom but the devil can such blindness proceed? It is he who, in order to keep us from learning what is better and nobler, and more conducive to morality, virtue, and the salvation of souls, mocks us with fancies, and seduces us into useless and cold controversial speculations which neither warm the heart with piety to God, nor with love to our neighbour, and that is the reason why, in the Church, there is no edification, and why Christian zeal, instead of increasing, seems daily to diminish."

This weighty comment, which unanswerably proves that among the parties who attended the trial, *Wesel* had some secret and influential friends, and that among the deputies from *Heidelberg* (to whose number the author seems to have belonged), there was one at least who, in the main, shared his sentiments, is appropriately followed by an opinion still more remarkable, viz., that of *John Wessel.* *Wessel*, who by this time had returned to his native country, seems, after the condemnation of his friend, to have been threatened with a similar danger, and therefore had recourse to an acquaintance who was a learned jurist, viz., Rudolph van Veen, for advice as to what might befall. In the letter which he wrote for this purpose,[1] he deplores the fate of *Wesel*, believing him to have been sentenced to death by fire, and describes his own relative position in a very characteristic way. He owns that, possessing a greater share of prudence, he had often felt anxious at the bold and inconsiderate style of ex-

[1] *Wesseli* Opp. p. 920. It may be read in full in the life of *Wessel.*

pression which *Wesel* used, and had always looked upon it as an odious thing, to bring such matters as he did before the undiscerning multitude. But he afterwards characterises *Wesel* as a "venerable man," and speaks of him as follows: "Although I disapprove of his extravagant, and for the people offensive, absurdities, still his learning and acumen are so great, that I cannot help loving him and taking an interest in his fate. O how much better would it have been for him, if, in our way, as I often expressed myself to you at Paris, he had practised himself beforehand, in the conflicts between the Realists and Formalists, and then not without some measure of foresight and preparation, but, as if from a fortress and watch-tower, contemplated the approaching assault!"

Trithemius, the zealous scholar of the 15th century, has no doubt refused to *Wesel*, as a heretic, a place in his work on Ecclesiastical authors. On the other hand, in his Chronicles of the Monastery of Sponheim,[1] and under date 1479, he makes the following brief mention of him:—"*John Ruchard of Upper-Wesel* was, in this year and under John Colnhausen, the 10th Abbot of Sponheim, compelled to recant at Mayence certain articles, which he had preached at Worms, and to witness the committal of all his writings to the flames, and was then, as a penance, confined in the Augustinian Monastery, where he pined with sorrow and soon died."[2] We have, however, a fuller and more interesting notice of *Wesel* from the pen of an author who supplemented the work of Trithemius, Johann *Butzbach*. This bold spirited man is not afraid to bear the most favourable testimony to the victim of persecution, and to speak of him as follows:[3] "*John of Upper-Wesel*, a Rhinelander, was a person eminently well-versed in sacred Scripture, thoroughly trained in the Scholastic philosophy, distinguished as a Professor of Theology, and in his discourses to the people (for he was a preacher),

[1] Chronicon Sponhem. in *Trithemii* Opp. historic. ed. M. Freher. p. ii. p. 391.

[2] Then follows an outline of his doctrines, which has been literally engrossed in *Bzovii* Annal. eccles. T. xviii. p. 158. 228.

[3] In the work, Auctarium in libr. Joh. *Trithemii* de scriptoribus ecclesiasticis, a manuscript belonging to the library of the University at Bonn, fol. 79 verso.

an orator of great skill and repute. He had an acute intellect and an eloquent tongue, and was no less noted for his life and morals, than for his learning. He was the author of several Commentaries upon Holy Scripture, and of other treatises upon various subjects, but which contained some errors against the Catholic faith. These, at the instigation of several Germans of rank and learning, by command of Archbishop Diether, and after a formal recantation on the part of the author, were publicly consigned to the flames." Butzbach relates the exclamation we have already cited, as uttered by *Wesel* when his writings were burned, and then proceeds: "It is said that *Wesel*, on the invitation of a learned native, paid a visit to Bohemia, and was there seduced into the errors of the Hussites, which took their origin from John Wickliffe. Some overwhelm him, as a sectarian, with all manner of blame, as for instance *Wigand*, but there are others who highly commend him."[1]

In the ranks of the latter, the foremost place is due to *Luther* and his Protestant followers. It is true that *Luther* has nowhere pronounced so high a panegyric upon *John of Wesel* as upon *John Wessel*. This, however, is explained not merely by the fact that *Wessel*, as a great Reformer and Divine, really was the superior of the two, but partly also, and in a higher degree, by the

[1] At the end of the 15th or the beginning of the 16th century, there appeared an *Apology for John of Wesel*, by a certain *Wigand Tribellius*, to which *Wigand Wirth* (synonymous with *Caupo*,) a Dominican of Frankfort, who acquired celebrity at the latter of these dates, and was a keen zealot, replied by a *Dialogus Apologeticus*, and states as follows:— That it was in consequence of his treatise addressed to Nicolaus the Bohemian, that *Wesel* fell into the hands of the Inquisition, and that Nicolaus was put into prison: That an epistle was afterwards discovered in *Wesel's* hand-writing, full of the worst heresies, addressed to the leader of the Hussites, and attacking in the most shameful manner the orthodox faith, the Romish chair, the prelates of the Church, and the spiritual jurisdiction. *Wigand* quotes several passages from the work, De auctoritate past. eccl., and it might be supposed that that was the work he meant. But he quotes others also which are not there It is possible that the letter ad Bohemorum summum antistitem et haeresiarcham may be a fiction of the heresy-hunter. See upon all this *Walch* Monim. med. aev. ii., 2 Praef. p. xvii. sqq. Respecting *Wigand Wirth.*, consult *Rotermund's* edition of the Epist. obsc. viror. Hannov. 1830, preface p. 95, and *Gieseler's* K. Gesch. ii. s. 342, note u.

fact that to the reformer and his associates, *Wessel* was a new and astonishing phenomenon, a cheering echo from afar, whereas *Wesel* was one with whom, from an early period, they were acquainted and familiar. At the same time, *Luther* was far from repudiating the man who had gone before him, and by means of his writings had even, as it were, been his teacher. Not only does he acknowledge that it was from *Wesel's* books, which then ruled the University of Erfurt, that he derived the learning which procured him his degree, but he speaks with great interest of his master's fate. "I call to mind," he says,[1] "how Master *John Vesalia*, who was a preacher at Mayence, was by the desperate and haughty murderers, called *haereticae pravitatis inquisitores* (*inventores* would be a more proper word,) the preacher-monks, condemned for nothing but refusing to say, 'I believe there is a God,' and saying, 'I know there is a God.'" Not less kindly does *Luther* espouse the cause of *Wesel*, in a letter to Spalatin.[2] Here he explains one of his paradoxes, in a way no doubt consonant to the meaning of the author. Among these paradoxes, as I have already mentioned,[3] there is the following: "When we say, 'Thy kingdom come,' we do not pray for the kingdom of heaven, because that kingdom does not come to us." On this *Luther* observes, "*Wesalia's* remark upon the petition for the kingdom of God, I consider as having no other design but to drive from men's heads the common opinion, according to which they understand the kingdom of God to mean merely the state of *future glory*, and therefore give themselves no concern about the kingdom of God, which has already commenced, and is highly extolled in Scripture. Although it be the same kingdom which now is, and which is also to come, being here begun in faith, and hereafter consummated in glory.

Next to Luther, we rank his zealous disciple *Flacius*.[4] This

[1] In the work de Conciliis, Walch. Ausg. Th. 16. s. 2743. Luther's remark about *Wesel's* unwillingness to say, "I believe there is a God," instead of "I know there is a God," alludes no doubt to the fact that in his trial he was obliged in all cases to say he *believed* in place of *knew*.

[2] Letter of the 23d March 1524. Nro. 588. Th. 2. p. 492. in De Wette's work.

[3] See at p. 297.

[4] Catalog. Test. verit. Lib. xix. T. ii. p. 884, 885.

author justly places *Wesel* among the witnesses of the truth prior to the Reformation, gives a list of his peculiar opinions, among which, besides those already noticed, he mentions that he repudiated the sacrament under a single species, confirmation, extreme unction, auricular confession, satisfactions, celibacy, and the doctrine of free will, and cites from his sermons several of the peculiarities which we have already noticed. *Flacius* very pertinently remarks, that *Wesel* experienced the truth of his own words: "Now-a-days it is hard to be a Christian." Of his writings, the only one known to him was the treatise against Indulgences. He believed that the others were still to be found at Erfurt, a supposition probably correct at the time, but which recent investigations have not confirmed.

Protestant theologians of a still later date likewise mention *Wesel* with applause, especially Martin *Chemnitz*,[1] who, however, erroneously represents him as having been condemned to be burnt to death; Francis *Buddeus*,[2] who praises him as the friend of *Wessel*, and the sharer of his sentiments; *Weismann*,[3] who describes him as a theologian celebrated for his independence of mind; and *Hottinger*,[4] who likewise assigns him a place among the most notable pioneers of the Reformation.

Catholic writers required of course to speak of him in another strain. At first they mentioned him in their histories with indifference, or even praised him as a liberal-minded, zealous, and pious man. Of the first, we have an instance in *Trithemius;* of the second, in *Butzbach*, and the *Continuator of the Chronicle of Auersberg*, who extols him as a theologian of the most approved walk, and cites with predilection the favourable testimonies already quoted of *Engelin* and *Kaisersberg*.[5] But when the consequences of the tendency which he had helped to promote came to light in the Reformation, and the two parties were sharply

[1] Examen Concil. Trident. T. iv. p. 87.

[2] Isagoge, P. ii. p. 1175.

[3] Hist. eccles. T. i. p. 1213.

[4] Hist. eccles. P. iv. p. 53—61. *Hottinger* also gives *Wesel's* Paradoxa and the Examen magistr., but he too confounds this author with *Wessel*, for his narrative begins, Joh. *Wesselus*, Groningensis, concionator Wormatiensis.

[5] Paralipomena rerum memorab. ab a. 1230 usque ad a. 1538, historiae Abbatis Ursperg. per quendam Studios. annexa.

divided, only a hostile estimate could be expected from Catholics. And such in fact are the judgments which we find in the Dominican *Bzovius*, and the Jesuit *Serrarius*. *Bzovius*,[1] following *Trithemius's* Chronicle of Sponheim, speaks of *Wesel* as a justly condemned heretic, and not only charges him, as others do, with rejecting the sacrament of extreme unction,[2] but with an assertion of which we may be quite certain that, in the form in which he gives it, it never entered *Wesel's* mind,[3] viz., "That there is not now, and never was, any such thing as original sin, and that children are not conceived in, nor condemned on account of it; in like manner, that he himself (*Wesel*) never was subject to original sin." *Serrarius*, in his History of Mayence,[4] praises its University as contrasted with that of Tubingen, the latter having been the first to abandon the old faith, while the former had constantly and steadfastly adhered to it, and, under Archbishop Diether, made an example of one of the forerunners of the opinions which are now destroying so many souls. He then gives a summary of *Wesel's* articles of belief, wherein, besides the rejection of original sin and extreme unction, we find the following:[5] "All priests are properly bishops and *Popes*, and differ from them only by name and human authority," and he then concludes with a statement, which, though dictated by a most hostile spirit, amply recognizes *Wesel's* importance: "It is therefore evident that the Devil intended to have commenced with this person the tragedy, which he afterwards performed with *Luther*, if he had not been here in Mayence, seasonably and wisely prevented and if the miserable man whom he had seduced, and in self-deception, selected as his chosen instrument, had not been prevailed upon to repent and retract."

In the course of the 18th century, and in recent times, we find a more correct estimate of *Wesel*; and here, besides the

[1] Annal. eccles. T. xviii. p. 158, 228.

[2] Octavus articulus, quod extrema unctio non sit sacramentum, quia non per Christum, sed per homines sit instituta, sed sit oleum et maneat oleum sicut antea fuit.

[3] Articulus quintus.

[4] Nic. *Serrarii* Rerum Moguntinar. Libr. v. Mogunt. 1604. 4o. p. 144. 145. 877.

[5] Art. 5.

many Church-histories, and histories of doctrine, which casually allude to him, we meet with notices more or less full in *Bayle*,[1] Christ. Wil. Fran. *Walch*,[2] *Schroeckh*,[3] *Erhard*,[4] and *Gieseler*.[5] Here too we may also rank the *anonymous author of the Monography upon Diether of Isenburg*,[6] who gives a tolerably detailed account of the trial for heresy, but with little historical tact and discrimination, and intermingles it with some very silly reflections and opinions. It appears unnecessary to quote other authors who casually mention John of *Wesel*.[7]

As for the *writings* of *Wesel*, we know that they were burnt in Mayence before his own eyes. The nature of the case, however, rendered it an impossibility to destroy all the copies. *Wesel* himself said at the trial,[8] that he had sent his treatises on Ecclesiastical power, Indulgences, and Fasting, to many learned men, and in particular the last mentioned of them, to the Bishop of Worms. No doubt, therefore, copies of them must have been circulated in Germany, and owing to the author's connexion with the Nicolaus who is mentioned in the trial, and the interest which the Hussites must have taken in his productions, probably likewise in Bohemia.

[1] Diction. T. iv. p. 502 and 506.

[2] Monim. med. aev. vol. ii. fasc. 1. Praef. p. lii. sqq. fasc. 2. Praef. p. xv. sqq.

[3] K. Gesch. Th. 33. s. 295 ff.

[4] Gesch. des Wiederaufblühens, Th. 1. s. 289 ff. 339 ff.

[5] K. Gesch. B. 2. Abth. 4. s. 481 ff.

[6] Frankfurt 1792. 2 BB.

[7] We might here also mention Conr. *Gesneri* Biblioth. univers. ed. Tigur. 1545. p. 462. Johann. *Wolfii* Rer. memorab. Centenar. xv. ad. ann. 1464. p. 874. edit. 1600. Philipp. *Mornaei* Mysterium iniquitatis s. histor. papatus rom. edit. 1611. p. 605. *Oudini* Comment. de scriptor. eccles. T. iii. p. 2715 sqq. *Fabricii* Biblioth. med. et inf. Lat. T. iv. p. 168 and 491. *Schunks* Beiträge zur Mainzer Geschichte 1788, 3tes Heft. *Mainzer* geistliche *Monatsschrift* 1789, Februar bis Mai. Nik. *Bogts* Gesch. von Mainz. Frankf. 1792. 1. 143—149. Busch, Zugabe zu den hannoverschen gelehrten Anzeigen. s. 149. Several writers, as for instance, *Wharton* in append. ad Cavei hist. liter. vol. ii. p. 191, and P. *Freher* Theatr. viror. illustr. p. 1431, make many false and confused statements, by confounding, *John of Wesel*, and *John Wessel*.

[8] Examen, art. 3.

In this manner, they were preserved, and have come down though but partially to us.[1]

During his long career as professor and preacher, *Wesel* had written much.[2] It was also the custom of the times, when as yet the distinction between manuscript and print did not exist, to reckon their college lectures among the works of professors. Of this description, seem to have been the books of *Wesel*, which *Luther* speaks of having studied[3] for his degree at Erfurt. As being calculated to prepare for a master's degree, these books were no doubt chiefly philosophical, *i.e.*, they treated of Logic, Dialectics, and probably also of Mathematics and Physics. They must, however, have been supplanted by other and later text books, and not a trace of them has been preserved. Flacius was acquainted only with the treatise against Indulgences, but had heard that other writings of *Wesel* were still in existence at Erfurt.[4] This might very possibly be true in the 16th century, so far at least as regards the works which he wrote as professor. By degrees, however, even these were lost, and in the 19th century, none of them was extant. Doctor H. A. *Erhard*, who was then himself Librarian in Erfurt, says[5] (in the year 1827), "A conjecture has been expressed that some of the manuscripts of *Wesel* might still exist, but after the union of the monastic libraries into the present Royal library of Erfurt, I have not found this conjecture verified."

At the trial we find *Wesel* himself owning the following *four works.*[6]

1. *Super modo obligationis legum humanarum ad quemdam Nicolaum de Bohemia (vel Polonia).*

[1] *Walch.* Monim. med. aev. ii. 1. Praef. lviii. Nihilominus quum multa illorum exempla antea per universam Germaniam et Bohemiam essent dispersa, non potuit fieri, quin maxima illorum pars salva ad nostram aetatem transmitteretur.

[2] It is said in his praise that not merely docendo, but also scribendo scholam Erphordensem non parum illustrasse. Flacius Catalog. test. ver. L. xviii. t. ii. p. 885.

[3] See supra 230.

[4] He says in the passage quoted: Audio Erphordiae ejus scripta adhuc inveniri posse. Ego tantum ejus libellum contra indulgentias habeo.

[5] Geschichte des Wiederaufblühens, B. i. s. 293.

Examen, art. 3.

2. *De potestate ecclesiastica.*
3. *De indulgentiis.*
4. *De jejunio.*

He denies having written any other tracts or epistles, at least to Bohemians, or other heretics and schismatics.[1] It is possible that he may have composed two other disquisitions, the one *De processione Spiritus Sancti*,[2] the other, *De peccato mortali*.[3] But the terms both of the interrogation, "*an scripserit*," and of the answer, "*fatetur*," or "*dicit se scripsisse*," are too vague to admit of any certain inference being drawn from them. It is possible that *Wesel* never wrote any separate work upon these subjects, but had merely touched upon them casually, although at some length, in other writings. If, however, any such treatises ever existed, they have disappeared without a trace. The same is the case with the disquisitions, *Super modo obligationis legum humanarum* and *De jejunio.*

In this way, therefore, besides the sayings of *Wesel*, which have been delivered orally, and the fragments of his Epistle to Reinhard of Sickingen, we have only two works of any considerable length from his pen, the *Treatise* against *Indulgences*, and that upon the *Authority, duty, and power, of the pastors of the Church.*

1. The *Disputatio adversus indulgentias*, composed, as we have already shewn, about the year 1450,[4] consists of two small essays written at different times, but now forming a whole; Or rather it has for its basis an older and short piece, a *compendium*,[5] containing the principal propositions of *Wesel* respecting Indulgences which was subsequently, and as he advanced in knowledge, extended, and in particular passages explained.[6] The substance of this treatise we have already stated at length. The only impression which we possess is in *Walch's* Monimenta medii aevi,

[1] Examen, art. 5.
[2] Examen, art. 7.
[3] Examen, art. 24.
[4] See p. 258 f.
[5] *Walch* Monim. med. aev. ii. 1. p. 114—119: Hoc est compendium, quod volui huic tractatui inserere, in quo longius latiusque de indulgentiis sum dicturus.
[6] This enlargement comprehends in the work just quoted from p. 119—156.

Goetting. 1757. vol. ii. fasc. 1. p. 111—156. For this impression *Walch* assures us he used the copy which had belonged to *Flacius*,[1] but which is now in the Royal Library of Hanover. The little work had existed about 307 years before the art of printing gave it a wider publicity.

2. The *Opusculum de auctoritate, officio, et potestate pastorum ecclesiasticorum*, probably written at a later date, and during *Wesel's* pastoral labours in Worms,[2] was first discovered by *Von der Hardt* in an imprint[3] belonging probably to the 16th century. Here, without mention of the author, it bears the title: *Epistola cujusdam sacrarum literarum studiosi responsiva, tractans de pontificii muneris functione, et auctoritate superiorum in subditos, et subditorum in superiores obedientia.* At the conclusion, a passage from Melanchthon's Loci (of the edition 1521) is annexed, as an appendix,—*a typographo adjecta*—a circumstance which proves that the edition belonged to the circle of the friends of *Luther*. His thorough acquaintance with the literature of the period of the Reformation, soon enabled *Von der Hardt* to divine the author, and in fact the whole contents and many particular passages so perfectly suit the position of *Wesel* in Worms, as to leave no room to doubt that the treatise is really his. The older edition I never saw. *Walch* bestowed his care upon a new one in the Monimenta medii aevi., vol. ii. fasc. 2, p. 115—162. Both he and *Von der Hardt* seem to suppose[4] that this was the treatise addressed by *Wesel* to *Nicolaus of Bohemia or Poland*, and it does bear an inscription to a brother cherishing the same sentiments as the author.[5] The letter to *Nicolaus*, however, answerably to the superscription, expatiated *super modo obligationis legum humanarum*, and although the subject is also touched in the treatise, still that was at *Wesel's* trial[6] too distinctly discriminated from

[1] Praef. p. lviiii.: Libere nunc suo jure utatur libellus, ereptus ex tenebris et ex eodem codice, qui *Flacii* possessione fuit, descriptus, occupet locum, qui ipsi debetur.

[2] See p. 301.

[3] *Walch* Monim. med. aev. ii. 2. Praef. p. xvi.

[4] In the work quoted, p. xvii. sqq.

[5] He begins with the words: Lectis tuis literis, charissime confrater, mirum in modum sum delectatus.

[6] Art. 3.

another *De potestate ecclesiastica*, to admit of their being identified, and so we may with tolerable certainty suppose, that we have here the treatise alluded to in the trial, under the title *De potestate ecclesiasticâ*, and that the *charissimus confrater* whom *Wesel* addresses is some other Christian man, probably a clergyman or monk in his vicinity, and not the Hussite *Nicolaus*.

APPENDIX.

I.

HANS BÖHEIM OF NIKLASHAUSEN,

CALLED THE HOLY YOUTH.

A FORERUNNER OF THE PEASANT-WAR.

Of Scripture we have now good store,
And Testaments, both Old and New;
We need no revelations more,
Nor yet to hie as many do,
To hear what Hans the Piper raves,
In Niklashausen's church and caves.

SEBASTIAN BRANT, in his "*Ship of Fools*."
On the Contempt of Scripture.

HANS BÖHEIM (OR BEHEM) OF NIKLASHAUSEN,

A FORERUNNER OF THE PEASANT WAR.

The course of the narrative has already[1] led us to mention this remarkable person. Here we intend to speak more fully, and communicate all the information extant respecting him. The inducement to this is not merely the discovery we have made of a cotemporaneous, and as it appears, official document on the subject, but the intimate connexion in which the man and his doings stand with the task undertaken in the present work. The importance of the *Peasant-war* in its bearing upon the *Reformation* as outwardly connected with it, but at the same time inwardly distinct, the sinister light which it cast upon the great event, and the way in which it was repudiated and combated by the Reformers in their writings, are well known. The war of the peasantry was the translation of spiritual liberty into the political domain; it was wild fanaticism side by side with sound piety, revolution with reformation. Far, however, from forcing the Reformation from its course, this terrible blow rather served as the occasion of demonstrating its higher energy, proving the means by which its authors attained to a full and clear consciousness of what their work was and what it ought to be. And just as the Reformation had its deep-seated and preparatory antecedents, so was there also a prelude to the Peasant-war. While the dawn of the one brightens the sky, the fiery signals and cloudy pillars of the other also shoot into the air. Nay more, just as the Reformers take the

[1] See p. 335.

field against the prophets of Zwickau, Thomas Münzer and the other fanatics of their time, so do we find the more noble of their pioneers occupying the same hostile attitude towards those who in an earlier day paved the way for violent revolutionary movements.

It is not our intention unfeelingly to condemn the commotions which arose among the rural population of the 16th century. In part these were provoked by intolerable oppression, and had a foundation in deep and long and painfully-experienced wants, as is proved by the mere fact that the most of what they then claimed with violence was in the course of centuries cheerfully conceded to them. At the same time, it is undeniable that the whole movement was ill-advised and imprudent. The passion for liberty was neutralized by crude and Utopian ideas of it threatening destruction to both state and church. Opposition to existing things rose to a fanaticism, which broke the bonds of society and aimed at its destruction; and the fortitude displayed was so far from being enlightened and enduring, that it almost continually fluctuated between wild presumption on the one hand and pusillanimity and cowardice on the other. It was a foul compound of a strong but misdirected love of liberty with piety strongly excited, but often pushed the length of tempting God and committing crime, and not seldom also with worldly lusts and desires, which disrelished the restraints of law and order, and strove with impetuous haste after some unknown good. The same impure commixture and fermentation of heterogeneous elements, of righteous indignation at existing corruptions and abuses, of sound and often surprisingly accurate knowledge of the changes which required to be made, combined with the most confused notions of the way to make them, of overstrained self-excitement and of violent agitation, or fraudulent seduction of the common people, are also to be found in the phenomena, which preceded the war of the peasantry, and foretold its calamities.

One of the most remarkable of these premonitory signs, perhaps the most significant of all, is that of which we now intend giving an account.

In *Niklashausen*, a considerable village pleasantly situate two leagues from Wertheim, and then belonging to Eastern Fran-

conia,[1] and the diocese of Wurtzburg, but which is now included in the Duchy of Baden, there appeared after the middle of the 15th century (1476) a youth connected by birth with the common people,[2] and who preached the strangest doctrines. His christian name was *John*, and, probably from his native land, but perhaps also from his opinions, he received the surname of Böheim or Behem *(Bohemia)*. Before he appeared as a prophet he had, it seems, been a farm servant, and herded cattle. He was also a great frequenter of fairs and wakes, where he performed upon the drum and pipe, just as Bohemia still supplies so many of our itinerant musicians. From this circumstance he derived the name of the *kettle-drummer*, the *piper*, and *piper Jack*. Afterwards, when he had acquired celebrity among the people by his discourses, they called him "the Holy Youth."[3]

To this person—to use the language in which one of the chroniclers relates his conversion—it was told, that a holy father of the Franciscan order had a few years before come into the

[1] *Trithemius*, in the Chron. Spanh. says: Rudolphus, Episcopus Herbipolensis, in cujus Parochia Niclashausen est—and in the Ann. Hirsaug.: apud Francos Orientales in dioecesi Wirtzburgensi.

[2] Compare for information respecting him the Nuremberg Chronicle, written by Antony *Kreuzer*, in Waldau's Beitragen zur Gesch. v. Nürnberg iii. 419, and *Müllner* in his Annals of Nüremberg for the year 1476. (I am indebted for extracts from both these works, which were not accessible to myself, to the kindness of Dr *Hagen.)* *Trithemius*, both in the Chronicon Spanhem. ad ann. 1476, p. 389 and 390 of the Opp. historica, and in the Annal. Hirsaug. t. ii. p. 486 sqq. (They are virtually reprinted in *D'Argentré* Collectio judicior. de novis error. T. i. P. 2. p. 288—290). Lor. *Friess* Historie der Bischöfe zu Würzburg 1544. s. 852—855. *Will* Beitrag zur fränk. Kirchenhistorie in der Gesch. der Wiedertäufer, s. 57 ff. Bensen Geschichte des Bauernkriegs in Ostfranken, Erlangen 1840 s. 189—192. *Hagen* Deutschlands lit. und relig. Verhältnisse im Reformat. Zeitalter, B. 1. s. 170 and 171. Of the older writers Trithemius and Friess, and of the more modern, Bensen, give the fullest details. The latter, however, merely extracts from Friess.

[3] The old record calls him Hans (Jack) Behem. Müllner says expressly that he was a Bohemian by birth. Trithemius describes him as tympanista quidam, brutorum pastor animalium, homo pauper et idiota, and also as pastor porcorum. Brant calls him the "Bagpiper;" the Chronicler Kreutzer, "a herdsman and kettle-drummer;" which Müllner also does, annexing the popular name of "Piper-Jack." In the heading of D'Argentré's extract from Trithemius he is strangely designated *Joannes Hanselinus* (the words are synonymous). The old record calls him "the Youth," and Friess "the Holy Youth."

district, preached to the people, and made them burn all their draughtboards; And so, about the time of Midlent, he conceived the notion that he was called to act in the same way, and to burn his drum. This accordingly he did, at the village of Niklashausen, situate upon the Tauber, below Castle Gamberg, and from that hour began to preach to the common people, telling them that the Virgin Mary had appeared to him, and commanded him to burn his drum, and that as he had hitherto helped them to dance and sin, so he should now do them good by preaching.[1] From revelations made by the Holy Virgin, however, who had disclosed herself to his view,[2] in white raiment, as he fed his cattle on the plain, he had learned the following *doctrines*,[3] and preached them to the lower orders, with remarkable boldness and skill.

It is a time of visitation. The wrath of God is threatening mankind and especially the priesthood. Nothing but his (Hans Böheim's) prayers had recently withheld God from destroying with frost the wine and corn.[4] Men ought to forsake their sins, cast off their gay attire, their collars, silken laces, their doublets and pointed shoes, and make a pilgrimage to the vale of Tauber. That was the place where above all others the Mother of God desired to be worshipped; there the most abundant grace was to be obtained; there all who worshipped the Virgin Mary, received the most complete pardon of sin. There is more grace in the vale of Tauber than at Rome or any other place.[5] Whoever dies there goes at once to heaven. Even children obtain this grace, and he would stake his word, that he would there rescue with his hand every soul in hell.[6] The spiritual and temporal power were corrupt; The clergy sunk in avarice, ambition, and pleasure. The temporal lords oppressed the people. "The Emperor," he said, "is a miscreant, and the Pope a nonentity. It is the Emperor who gives to princes, counts, and knights authority to tax and burden the common people. Alas! for you, poor devils."[7] But things, he

[1] This is related by Friess in l. c. s. 852.
[2] Tritheim in *D'Argentré* Collect. p. 289.
[3] They are collected from the Old Record, from Trithemius Annal. Hirs. in *D'Arg.* p. 289 and Friess s. 852.
[4] Old Record.
[5] Old Record: Friess. s. 852.
[6] Old Record.
[7] Ibid.

thought, could not remain in that state. There would soon be no Pope nor Emperor, no prince, bishop, spiritual or temporal magistrate, but every one would be his neighbour's brother.[1] "Princes, civil and ecclesiastical, ought to possess no more than common folk, and then all would have plenty. The time would come when princes and nobles would have to labour for a day's wage.[2] The fish in the water, and the game upon the land, ought to be common. Tolls, road-money, servitudes, rents, taxes, and tithes to spiritual or temporal superiors were to be wholly done away."[3] It was chiefly against the clergy, however, that he raised his threatening voice. "He would sooner," he said, "undertake to mend a Jew than a clergyman or a divine. Even could a priest be brought to believe him, the moment the man returned to the company of his brethren he would become worse than before."[4] . . . . "The clergy have too many benefices."[5] . . . They ought never to have more than one. "But go thou," was the voice, and command of the Mother of God to him,[6] "go and proclaim to my believing people, that my Son no longer can, or will, tolerate their avarice, pride, and voluptuousness. If they do not forthwith mend their lives, the whole world will be made to suffer affliction for their sins." Nay, he foresaw the time when wrath would fall upon the depraved priests. "They shall be slain," he exclaimed, "and ere long it will be seen that a priest will put his hand upon his shaven crown, that it may not be known what he is."[6] When the priests reviled him as a heretic, and threatened him with the stake, he replied, "If they only knew the meaning of the word, they would discover that they themselves are the heretics, not I. Woe befall them if they do burn me![8] They will soon find out what they have done, and be brought to nought." Even excommunication he regarded with contempt. Divorce by a priest appeared to him an infraction of the laws of God, to whom alone it pertains to dissolve the marriage tie. He also rejected the doctrine of Purgatory; for, as he well said, if an Emperor or a Pope be a good man, and be found to be

[1] Müllner Nürnb. Annalen z. J. 1476. Friess. s. 852.
[2] Old Record.
[3] Ibid.; Trith. Chron. Spanh.: Neque decimas dandas esse, neque census alicui. Also Annal. Hirs. in *D'Arg.* p. 289. Friess s. 852. 853.
[4] Old Record. [5] Old Record. [6] Trithemius in d'Arg. p. 289.
[7] Old Record. [8] Old Record.

so at the last, he goes directly to heaven; whereas if he be found to be wicked, he goes directly to hell, and so there is no Purgatory.[1]

Doctrines like these were at the time far from being isolated, and it is proper that we should first enquire into their *source*. They never could have been bred in the brain of a young herdsman.[2] In point of fact, they were so widely diffused that he might have picked them up in various quarters. Let us first look to the native country of the youth. He was probably a Bohemian, and may, even as a boy, have been educated in the principles of the Hussites.[3] During his subsequent residence in Franconia, vagrant and seditious demagogues seem to have wrought upon his mind and used him as their instrument. Trithemius speaks of a Mendicant friar who taught him his doctrines, and often, when he was preaching from the window, stood in the apartment behind, and dictated to him what to say.[4] This person may have been one of the rigid fanatical Franciscans who are known to have been violently opposed to the dominant Church. The oldest record we possess mentions a Beghard who associated with the youth, but who decamped at his apprehension, and was afterwards seized. The Mendicant friar and the Beghard may possibly have been one and the same person, but perhaps also there was a union of several discontented characters. According to the same record, the clergyman of Niklashausen was in league with the drummer, and had publicly borne testimony to his miracles. On several occasions also he had allowed his house to be illuminated by night, in order to attract pilgrims.[5]

[1] Old Record.

[2] Trithemius says in the Ann. Hirsaug. of Böheim: qui nescio, quo spiritu *suo* seductus, an *alieno*.

[3] Kreuzer in Waldau iii. 419: He pretended that the Virgin Mary had revealed to him these things. My opinion is that he received and *learned them from one of the disciples of Huss*.

[4] Annal. Hirs.: Ferunt illum aliquoties hominis cujusdam claustralis mendici occulto susurro, quid praedicaret, edoctum, et ob id frequentius per fenestram loquebatur ad plebem, ut Doctorem suum ad aurem sine nota posset habere praesentem. In d'Arg. p. 288. Here (p. 289) the trial of the drummer is also related, and among other particulars that: Interrogatus per chordam, omnia ficta esse falsaque et ementita confessus est, et Monachum supradictum vagum, mendicum et versipellem excogitavisse omnia voce libera dixit.

[5] Is all gleaned from the confessions of the prisoners from Niklashausen in the old Record.

Still more remarkable is the *impression* which the youth produced. There was indeed at the time a favourable soil for such doctrines as he taught, first in Franconia and then more extensively over Germany. In Franconia Huss hadbeen well-received, and his notions widely embraced. Here too, in the course of the 15th century, men eminent in various ways as poets, scholars, priests, and divines, had laboured, and owing to the more liberal tendencies of the age, to the disseverence of the spiritual and temporal territories, and to the comparatively favourable position of the citizen and peasant class, had laboured with remarkable success.[1] Here, not only Gregory of Heimburg, who moved in the higher circles, and belonged to the whole of Germany, but several other persons had come forward, aiming at the same objects, as Hans Böheim, and leaving behind them vestiges of their efforts. Thus about the middle of the 14th century, and under the government of Bishop Otho, Master Conrad *Hager*, a layman well versed in Scripture, had publicly taught at Wurtzburg, That money paid for masses, and other gifts made at funerals, for the repose and welfare of the souls of the departed, was simony, and robbery, and hindered the alms due to the poor and hungry; and had declared that though he had a whole roomful of florins, he would not permit a single one to be spent for masses after his death.[2] About the same time, Hermann *Kuchner*, a native of Nuremberg, and a priest of the Beghards, had at Wurtzburg defended the proposition, "That Popes and Bishops are, by virtue of their office, no greater or higher than other priests."[3] It is true that in the course of the year 1342, both of them recanted. Their principles, however, were not thereby at once extirpated from the minds of men. About the middle of the 15th century, a certain John *Müller* again preached the doctrines of Huss at Windesheim, Neustadt upon the Aisch, Rotenburg upon the Tauber, and Onoltzbach, held secret meetings, and gained a large party among the common people. On a threat of persecution the master fled, but 130 of his adherents

[1] See more proofs in Hagen Deutschl. lit. und relig. Verh. B. 1. s. 164 ff.

[2] Lor. Friessens Hist. der Bischöfe v. Wurtzburg s. 626.

[3] Ibid. s. 626.

were apprehended, conducted to Wurtzburg, and there persuaded to recant[1] by the Abbot John of Grumbach, a Doctor of Divinity, and Master Antonius, preacher in the cathedral. It is also possible that the Franciscan who preceded the drummer as a preacher of repentance in the district of the Tauber, may have taught the same principles. At any rate we find the whole country frequented by Beghards, who everywhere roused the people against the Hierarchy. Nor was the case different in contiguous territories, and even farther off. "The people," as Trithemius observes,[2] "are naturally inclined to novelty, and always strive to shake off the yoke of their rulers." At all times, and in every place they listen eagerly to doctrines which promise them liberty and equality, exemption from oppression and burdens, and a participation in new rights; and they were naturally peculiarly susceptible for such doctrines at a time when a sense of uneasiness and a lively expectation of great changes had seized upon the whole European family: "They listened to him," as the same Trithemius says,[3] "all the more fondly, the more boldly he ventured to attack and decry ecclesiastical privileges and the government of princes." And so it happened, that first from the vicinity, from Tauberthal and Schupfergrund, and then from greater distances, the people flocked in crowds to the new preacher, and soon looked upon him as a prophet. Not merely from the whole of eastern Franconia, but from Bavaria, Suabia, Alsace, the Rhine districts, from the Wetterau, Hesse, and Fulda,[4] from Thuringia, Saxony, and Meissen,[5] the apprentices, as a chronicler very graphically describes it,[6] "made their escape from the workshops, and the hinds from the plough. The hay-makers, with the sickles in their hand, and without leave of their masters asked or given, set off in the clothes in which the frenzy seized them. Few had any means of subsistence, but they were provided with meat and drink at the houses where they

[1] L. Friess in l. c. s. 801. Friess places the matter in the year 1446.

[2] In the Annal. Hirs. in d'Arg. p. 289.

[3] In the Chron. Spanhem. p. 390.

[4] ex Buchonia.

[5] Friess s. 853. Tritheim Ann. Hirs. in d'Arg. p. 286.

[6] Friess in l. c.

called. The only names they addressed to each other were brother and sister. Scarce a lady or servant girl who did not leave her locks at Niklashausen as a useless and sinful ornament. The crowd was particularly great upon Sundays and holidays.[1] Sometimes there were as many as 10, 20, nay, 30,000,[2] congregated. The village of Niklashausen, of course, had no accommodation for so vast a multitude, and they slept in the fields and woods around it. Innkeepers, cooks, merchants, tradesmen, with their utensils, soon collected, and the place assumed the appearance of a vast encampment.[3] Under such circumstances, of course, irregularities and excesses could not but occur, and we might easily have imagined, even although Trithemius had not expressly said, that much that was indecent took place.[4]

When the assembled crowd was considerable, the prophet came forward. He chose an elevated standing place such as an inverted cask,[5] or even climbed into a tree.[6] He was, however, particularly fond of preaching from a window, because then his master, the mendicant friar, or the clergyman, could stand behind him unseen, and suggest to him what to say.[7] Trithemius, it is true, tells us that he could neither think consecutively nor speak correctly,[8] but there must have been something affecting and popular in what he said, or he never could have produced the impression he did, and at all events he had no lack of boldness. At the close of the discourse, he usually called upon the people to

[1] Friess s. 853.

[2] Müllner gives 40,000; Friess the same number, s. 853; Trithemius 10, 20, to 30,000.

[3] Friess ibid.

[4] Jacebant homines utriusque sexus et aetatis noctu in campis, pratis et nemoribus vicinis et *multae fiebant impuritates.* Chron. Spanh. p. 390.

[5] Friess s. 853.

[6] Trithemius in the Ann. Hirs. in d'Arg. s. 288: Publice in campis et in pratis, nonnunquam etiam per fenestram e domuncula aliqua rusticana et *in arboribus* praedicabat.

[7] Trithemius Ann. Hirs. in l. c. p. 288. See the passage at p. 382. He adds in the Chron. Spanh.: Stabat homo ille fatuus in domo aliqua et per fenestram, quodam fugitivo monacho verbum suggerente, populo praedicabat. Friess, "The clergyman of the place usually stood beside him and prompted him."

[8] Annal. Hirs. in l. c. Cum nec loqui potuerit, nec apte ad propositum aliquid cogitare.

return upon the next Sabbath, holiday or festival assuring them that the attendance would then be twice as numerous.[1]

The people were *powerfully excited* both by the matter of his discourse which we have already characterized, and by the manner in which he came forward. They took him for a prophet,[2] and a divinely inspired teacher of truth, and called him the holy youth. At Holzkirchen, it was said, a person fell upon his knees before him,[3] received absolution, and was directed by him to go to the minister of Niklashausen, with whom he was in league. Many others are also reported to have knelt and asked his blessing, saying, "Pray for me, O, holy man," or "O, man of God, be gracious unto us and pity us;" On which occasions he used to lift up his hand and make the sign of the cross over the suppliants.[4] All, however, desired to see, speak, and in some way come into contact with him: For whoever but touched his clothes, looked upon himself as blessed and sanctified. So dense was sometimes the throng around him, that he could neither eat nor drink, nor attend to other bodily wants.[5] Keepsakes and memorials of him were in great request. His bonnet was rent into shreds; his clothes cut and torn from his body; and only too often did this unbounded reverence cost him a new suit, which, however, was easily procured by the overflowing contributions of the assembled multitude,[6] for as at a place of pilgrimage rich offerings of money, jewels, and clothes, were made, wax candles consecrated, and other such obligations presented.[7]

[1] Friess in l. c. s. 853.

[2] Trithemius says: Miserum hominem flexis in terram genibus adorabant, clamantes, eo audiente et tolerante: Vir sancte, meserere nobis. Chron. Spanh. p. 390.

[3] Old Record.

[4] Trithemius in d'Arg. s. 289. Friess s. 853.

[5] Trithemius p. 288.

[6] Ibid. and in the Chron. Spanh. p. 390, where it is said: Sed et pecias vestimentorum ejus pro sanctuario et reliquiis diripiebant, seque felicem aestimabat, qui eum tangere, videre vel audire meruisset. Friess s. 853. "The drummer went about with tufts on his cap, which the pilgrims tore off, and whoever succeeded in obtaining the smallest shred of one of them, fancied he had got hay from the manger at Bethlehem, or some other precious relic."

[7] Trithemius in the Chr. Spanhemiense: Multae pecuniae oblatae,

In fine, there was also no lack of what always accompanied any excitement of the kind, especially in those days. I allude to fictitious and pretended miracles.[1] At Niclashausen a drowned child was said to have been brought to life; at Ostheim a cripple to have been made straight; at Kertzenberg a person born blind to have been restored to sight; and on another occasion, at Niclashausen, a dumb man to have recovered his speech. Nay, it was declared that, in the vicinity of this place, a fountain had sprung up on a hill on which there had never been any water before, and during the night had been made to flow upwards. In short, every thing was made tributary to shew off the Tauberthal as a very sacred place, more abundant and effectual in graces and pardons than all the rest of the world. Nicklashausen was exalted above even Rome, and there, as the scene of his sojourn, the prophet comported himself like the vicegerent of God, and far superior to the pope. In this way the youthful victim of enthusiasm returned at last to the very point which he had set out with combatting. Resisting the Hierarchy, he constituted in his own person a hierarchy of the free spirit, of the most rude and arbitrary kind, and established it by the same improper means which hitherto had been often used by the priests against the people. Preaching repentance, he spread among the multitude disorders and excesses. Promising liberty and equality, he deluded them with all sorts of false miracles, emptied their purses, and caused himself to be reverenced as an idol. Few instances present to view so strange and lamentable a mixture of thirst for truth, and zeal for freedom, with enthusiasm and fanaticism.

Of course the *magistracy* could not remain quiet spectators of such proceedings. Not only did the great ecclesiastics in the neighbourhood, the bishops of *Wurtzburg* and *Mayence*, forbid their subjects to go to Nicklashausen; the civic council of *Nurenberg* issued the same prohibition, threatening transgressors with the highest pains of law, for which conduct the magistrates of that city are highly praised by Pope Sixtus, in a bull dated 4th February 1482.[2] A

miracula conficta et multa contra puritatem Christianae fidei patrata. The several pretended miracles are related in the old official Record.

[1] Friess s. 853.

[2] Kreuzer: "The authorities of Nürnberg then forbade all the citizens, under severe penalties, either to go or make a pilgrimage to

special occasion, however, rendered it necessary for the Bishop of *Wurtzburg* to interfere with a high-hand. On the Sabbath before St Killian's day, a festival held in particular reverence in Wurtzburg and its diocese, the piper preached again, and at the conclusion of his discourse, intimated that, by command of the Holy Virgin, all the men were to return the next Saturday towards evening. He had a word or two to say to them. They were to bring with them their arms, but to leave their wives and children at home.[1] To prevent the open rebellion which was thus projected, Bishop Rudolph, in one of the following nights, sent 34 dragoons to Niklashausen. They surprized "the piper" while asleep, and conducted him on horseback to Wurtzburg. In that town 4000 pilgrims had already met, who, perceiving it was intended to carry off their prophet, attempted to defend him, but in vain. The horse of one of the dragoons was sorely wounded by a peasant. Persons at a greater distance, knowing nothing of what had happened, congregated upon the appointed day, in vast multitudes, at Niklashausen. They were estimated at above 34,000. On learning that the holy youth had been apprehended, many of them returned home; others who were more closely connected with him, resolved to attempt his rescue. One in particular stood up, pretending to have received a command from the Holy Trinity that the brethren should march with tapers and swords to the castle of Wurzburg, and promising that its gates would open before them Accordingly about 10,000, or as others say, a smaller number arose, marched with arms but otherwise poorly accoutred, to the place, and made their appearance before the episcopal city, partly as holy pilgrims and partly as high-handed rebels, some

Nicklashausen. For this, one of the councillors was highly commended by the Pope." Müllner: "The town council of Nürnberg caused intimation to be made in all churches and monasteries, forbidding their citizens and subjects to make either pilgrimages or journeys to Niclashausen—conduct which Pope Sixtus afterwards, in a bull addressed 14th Feb. 1482 to the Council, highly praised." To the same effect is the statement of Friess s. 852. He adds, "The report circulated, that the prophet was under the influence of a conjuror or exorcist, who was accustomed to appear to him dressed in white, and in the shape of the Virgin Mary."

[1] See the whole narrative in Friess ss. 853 and 854.

hundreds of them with burning tapers.[1] The leaders of this multitude were not mere peasants, but two knights, Kuntz and Michael of Thunfeld, father and son—a circumstance which shows how serious the matter had become, and is another point of resemblance with the subsequent war of the peasantry. The Bishop sent his Marshal, George von Gebsattel, to meet them, to whom they signified that they wished the holy youth given up to them; if the Bishop surrendered him freely, it would be well; if not, they would take him by force. All this time the Marshal was pelted with stones, and the utmost he could do was to escape. The Bishop then ordered out a troop of soldiers, and again sent Conrad of Hutten to the peasants. Conrad intimated to them that the Bishop had no intention to release the prisoner but rather to punish him as he deserved; and ordered all subjects of the Bishopric, on their duty and oath, to return home;—if not, they would have themselves to blame for the consequences. Thereupon the Wurtzburg peasantry departed with one accord. Those of Wertheim, and others from the Taubergrund, also retreated, but in compact bodies. Having learned, however, that there were some of the ringleaders in the crowd, the Bishop despatched several troopers to lay hold of these. The peasantry stood on their defence, and twelve of them were stabbed. Many fled to Büttelbrunn and took refuge in the Church, but were obliged to surrender, conducted to Wurtzburg and imprisoned in the tower.[2]

The minister of Niklashausen and the Beghard, with whom Hans Böheim was connected, were likewise seized.[3] We possess, in the old, and, as regards this part of the history no doubt, the official report, the confession of the prisoners. They acknowledged that at the outset of the affair, they had often stuck up lights by night in the parsonage and church at Niklashausen, as a means of setting on foot a pilgrimage to the place; that the miracles were false; that the child at Niklashausen had not been actually drowned, nor the man at Ostheim lame; that the child at

[1] Müllner: Above 3000 persons appeared before the castle of Würzburg, more than a hundred of them bearing tapers in their hands, and required that he should be delivered up, but in vain. Friess states, s. 854, that 400 carried lights.

[2] Friess s. 854.

[3] Old Record.

Kortzenberg had till this day a weak sight, and that the dumb man had only feigned to be so for a sum of money; and that all had been done for no other purpose but to excite and delude the people. The minister also confessed that he had certified this and the other miracle to be true, without having any certain knowledge of their truth. The prisoners further stated, on examination, that a peasant at Niklashausen had cut the hair of the young women, although that is only proper to be done to nuns, and that after the seizure of the youth, another peasant had come forward and vented many strange and unchristian things against the government of the Holy Church. This appears to have been the same party who, in the name of the Holy Trinity, summoned the crowd to march to Wurtzburg.[1]

All of them made a penitent confession. Even the Beghard seems to have behaved treacherously to the piper. For immediately after his apprehension, he made an attempt to escape.[2] The Bishop in a few days dismissed the whole of the prisoners on their oath except Hans Böheim himself, the peasant who, in the name of the Trinity, had ordered the march to Wurtzburg, and the other who had wounded the horse of the Wurtemberg trooper.[3] These three were committed for trial.

Bishop Rudolph, the last of the family of Schernberg, was in other respects no harsh master. He is rather celebrated as "a sensible, wise, peaceable, and truthful prince, who greatly loved his subjects.[4]" This was a case, however, in which it was scarcely possible to admit grace, and where law and prudence

[1] Friess s. 854. [2] Old Record. [3] Friess s. 854.

[4] Friess Gesch. der Bisch. v. Würzb. s. 864. Bishop *Rudolph* died 19th April 1495. Friess relates the following anecdote of him. Being once in a state of great debility, he was entreated by the Canons to choose from among them, some competent man with whom to share the weight of the government. Whereupon he summoned them into his presence, took his cap into his hand, and said he would put it upon the head of the one whom he considered the most able. Having then inspected them all in succession, he replaced the cap upon his own head, saying, "If what I hear, and the people all say, be true, then, dear Rudolph, I know no one whom this cap better becomes, or who has more honourably earned it than thyself. Therefore keep it for a while longer." Friess subjoins s. 865. The Canons of the Cathedral perceiving how brave and stout-hearted, and firm of mind he was, bade him adieu, and went home with something like a blush in their faces.

alike required that an example should be made. The two peasants were accordingly condemned to die by the sword, and the piper himself by fire.[1] Nor did Kuntz of Thunfeld, the principal leader of the peasants, escape with impunity. In spite of his own appeal to the mercy of the Bishop, and the intercession of many of his relatives on his behalf, he was compelled to consign several of his possessions in feu to the bishoprick of Wurtzburg.[2]

Nor is the *execution of the sentence* itself unworthy of attention. Here also it is in our power to give the report of one who lived not many years after, viz. the pious Trithemius.[3] At the commencement of the 16th century,[4] he was abbot of the monastery of St James at Wurtzburg, at the back of which, upon an open space of ground, the execution took place.[5] He relates, and no doubt from the report of eye-witnesses, the following particulars. There were many men of good understanding, who at the condemnation of the piper at Wurtzburg, were not satisfied, although for different reasons. Several, chiefly among the citizens, whose over hasty faith perceived something Divine in the business, were very reluctant to approve of the execution of the youth, and expected either that were it at tempted, God would rescue him, or, that if actually accomplished, his death would be speedily avenged. Others, on the contrary, and among these the Bishop and his clergy, were afraid of some trick or delusion of the devil, whose instrument they looked upon the criminal to be. The sentence was nevertheless carried into effect. The youth was led forth to the open place behind the monastery of St James, not far from the hospital,[6] where almost the whole citizens were present in arms. Bound with cords, he was removed for a little to the side, while the two other criminals were beheaded. On beholding their fate, the youth

[1] Friess s. 854. The sentence pronounced upon the piper was not executed without some opposition of opinion on the part of the public, and, even as it appears, of those about the Bishop. Trithemius in *D'Argentré* p. 289

[2] The deed may be read in Friess. s. 854.

[3] In the Annal. Hirsaug. in *D'Argentré* pp. 289 and 290.

[4] From the 15th Oct. 1506. Cave Hist. liter. t. II. p. 203,in Append. H. Wharton.

[5] Ductus est ergo, says Trithemius, in eam planitiem, quae retro Monasterium est meum, circa domum leprosorum

[6] circa domum leprosorum.

enquired of the executioner, "Is that what you will do to me?" "No," was the reply, "for you a different bath is prepared." It would seem that he either had not seen the pile of faggots, or had not understood what it was. On being fastened to the stake, he sang with a loud voice several verses of a hymn in the German tongue to the Holy Virgin.[1] Many among the spectators looked upon him as a saint, and for that reason proof against fire, and were afraid of standing near, imagining that the flames might by Divine power dart forth, and take hold of them. In like manner others were in terror for some trick of the evil one; and the executioner, who was of this number, had shaven off the hair of the victim, to prevent anything devilish from harbouring there. The youth himself, when fixed to the stake, continued his singing, but when the fire was applied, and he began to feel the heat, he three times exclaimed, in doleful accents, Woes me! woes me! woes me! His voice, however, was soon choked, and the devouring flames reduced him to ashes. Even these, to prevent their becoming an object of superstitious reverence, the executioner was enjoined to cast into the Maine. No miracle was wrought during the whole affair, and nothing happened either before or after the execution, tending in the least degree to prove the innocence of the sufferer; and hence, in a very short time, the concourse of people to Niklashausen entirely ceased.[2]

That this whole phenomenon was a prelude of the war of the peasantry, and connected in the closest way with the commotions that ensued, nobody will deny. The principles in both cases were almost the same, excepting only that in the latter, when the eccentricity of the previous outbreak was somewhat abated, the claims of the peasantry, at least as expressed in the 12 Articles,[3]

[1] Carmina quaedam seu rythmos de Domina nostra, in lingua Theutonica compositos alta voce canebat.

[2] Friess, s. 854, says that the trooping to Niklashausen lasted for a few weeks after; but was at last stopped by order of the magistrates.

[3] The earlier 12 Articles of the peasantry of the year 1513, are to be found in *Bensen's* Gesch. des Bauernkriegs s. 50, the later, of 1525, in *Luther's* works Walch Ausg. Th. 16. s. 25. Of the former, Article 7th,

were more moderate. In like manner we see in both cases, the same means applied, and the same result attained. The piper comports himself quite in the way Münzer and others did, at first with audacity and fanaticism, and then with cowardice, and in so far is infinitely different from Huss and other true martyrs. In like manner, the judgment formed by liberal, but sober-minded cotemporaries upon this enterprise, was not very different from that which the Reformers, in their day, passed upon the insurrection of the peasantry. Sebastian *Brandt*, who in other matters is so liberal a man, certainly does not intend to praise the prophet, when in his Ship of Fools, which appeared about 1494, and consequently about 18 years after the Wurtzburg tragedy, he speaks[1] of the "bag-piper," and says that he who adheres to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, requires no further revelation, nor yet to visit the chapel or the cell of Nicklashausen. Though not properly a Reformer, *Trithemius* was one of the most enlightened and serious men of his age, and anything but satisfied with the ruling clergy, and yet we have seen with what contempt he everywhere speaks of the prophet. And the same judgment would doubtless have been passed upon the enterprise, had it been reported to them, by those whom, in a stricter sense, we call the forerunners of the Reformation.

that "Every priest is to have only one benefice;" Article 8th, that "bird-catching, fishing, hunting, and wood-cutting are to be free;" and Article 9th, that "all unjust taxes and tolls are to be abolished," all coincide with the preaching of Böheim. The same things are expressed, in somewhat greater detail, and partly more modified in numbers 2. 4. 5. 6. 8. of the later Articles.

[1] It should also be considered, that the circumstance of *Brant's* alluding to the affair in a popular poem composed so many years after it happened, is a proof of its general importance.

II.

CORNELIUS GRAPHEUS,

THE FIRST PROPAGATOR OF THE WRITINGS AND OPINIONS OF GOCH.

Discrutiat me fortuna tua, quanquam ipsum afflictissimum; sed quod divinitus geri videtur, forti animo perferendum censeo.

ERASMUS in an Epistle to Grapheus.

. . . . Si vobiscum sit Christus, inanis
Est omnis timor, haud possit contingere quicquam
Adversum Christo ex animo fidentibus. . . .

GRAPHEUS himself in the poetical lamentation he composed in prison.

CORNELIUS GRAPHEUS.

At the conclusion of this volume it may not be improper to give a short account of a man, who no doubt belonged to the age of the Reformation itself, having survived Erasmus twenty-two years, and Luther twelve, but who at the same time contributed so largely to pave its way and initiate it in the Netherlands, that he enjoys on that account a distinguished reputation among his countrymen, and hence, also, deserves some special notice in a work like the present. It is true that in a foregoing section we have already spoken of Grapheus, the person whom we have here in view, but we could there only allude to the phase of his life in which he was connected with Goch.[1] We intend here to take a more independent and comprehensive view of him.

He was, as we have already said, born in 1482,[2] one year before Luther, and two before Zwingli, at Alst in Flanders. In this manner his youth was passed at a time in the highest degree critical for his native country, both in a political and religious respect. Besides, from his entrance upon public life as secretary to the city of Antwerp, he lived in a place where the warmest interest was felt in the religious movements and changes then commencing. No city in the Netherlands, indeed, was at first more deeply imbued than Antwerp with reformatory sentiments.

[1] See 136—144.

[2] Respecting Cornelius *Grapheus* the chief works to be consulted are: Valer. *Andreae* Biblioth. Belg. Lovan. 1643. p. 150. *Foppens* (who does little more than repeat *Andreae*) Bibl. Belg. T. i. p. 201 and 202. *Swertius* Athenae Belg. p. 195. 196. *Brandt* Hist. Ref. Belg. T. i. p. 71—79. Dan. *Gerdesii* Hist. Ref. Gron. et Brem. 1749. T. iii. p. 20. *Ejusdem* Scrin. Antiquar. sive. Miscell. Gron. 1756. T. v. P. 1. p. 96—508. *Kist* en *Royaards* Archief voor kerkelijke geschiedenis, Th. 6. s. 153—167. Besides: *Freytag* Annal. litter. p. 396. *Paquot* Mémoires, T. vi. p. 187—196. *Catalog.* Bibl. Bunav. T. I. vol. ii. p. 1599. *Saxii* Onomast. T. iii. p. 122. *Hoeufft* Parnasus Latino-Belgicus p. 9. P. *Hofman Peerlkamp* Vita Belgarum, qui latina carmina scripserunt, in the Mémoires de l'Acad. Roy. de Bruxelles, T. ii. p. 56. Brux. 1822. —Schröckh K. Gesh. seit der Reform. ii. 353 and 358. Gieseler K. Gesh. iii. 1. s. 553. not. 5.

As we shall see in the following volume, many things had taken place in the Netherlands even in the course of the 14th, and especially of the 15th century, which both foretold, and helped to bring about, the more vigorous, free, and spiritual mould into which the whole system of Christianity in the Church was soon to be cast. It is only necessary to mention the names of Ruysbroek, Gerhard Groot, Florentius Radevins, Thomas à Kempis, John Wessel, John of Goch, and Des. Erasmus, in order to obtain a general notion of this. Nevertheless, the Netherlands were on the whole faithfully devoted to the Catholic Church and its head, and in the last decennia of the fifteenth century, and the commencement of the sixteenth, were kept in obedience, by the zeal of the Catholic government. No doubt, like all the branches of the Teutonic race, the inhabitants strove, and not unsuccessfully, against the introduction of the Inquisition, although at first they permitted without scruple the preaching of Indulgences. When, however, the signal was given by Luther for the attack upon that abuse, his papers and works, condemned so early as the 7th Nov., 1519,[1] by the Divines of Louvain, were yet eagerly read in the Netherlands, and could be circulated all the more generally that Count Edzard in the contiguous province of Eastfrieslands, permitted them to be publicly sold.[2] The elements of opposition, which had long existed, were now mightily stirred. No doubt strenuous opponents to Luther took the field with writings and disputations.[3] In particular, Jacob Latomus, a doctor of Louvain, whom the great reformer himself deemed worthy of a refutation, Eustachius *de Zichenis* (van de Rivieren), a Dominican from Brabant, and John Driédo (Dridoens), called Turenholt, an

[1] Luth. Opp. lat. Jen. i. 466. Löscher Ref. Acta iii. 850.

[2] Schröckh K. Gesch. nach der Ref. B. 2. s. 354. Compare also respecting him Hofstede de Groot in der Mongographie: Geschiedenis der Broederenkerk te Groningen Gron. 1832, s. 19, where this Count's connection with Gröningen is specially mentioned: Graaf *Edzard* hield zich dikwijls in Groningen op, trok vrienden en leerling van *Gansfort*, onder anderen Johannes *Agricola*, Rudolfs broeder, en Georg *Aportanus*, een Zwollenaar, van geboorte, aan zijn hof, en beminde zelf de schriften van *Erasmus*, *Luther*, en *Zwingli*. Overal begunstigde hij licht en deugd, en de Geestelijken onder zijn gebied, die het Evangelie predikten, beschermde hij tegen de woede hunner dweepzuchtige ambtgenooten. Zoo werd door hem in Oostfriesland het eerst van alle Europesche Staten, sedert 1520, de Kerkhervorming gelukkig tot stand gebragt.

[3] Dan *Gerdesii* Hist. Ref. T. iii. p. 21.

opponent, praised even by Erasmus for the decorous character of his controversy.[1] The defenders of the principles of the Reformation, however, were of greater weight, or at least more active and successful, and their bold appearance in the field, now produced an open war, which terminated, though not till after long convulsions, decidedly in favour of the Reformation. At Antwerp, in the first instance, and about the year 1519, Jacob *Spreng*, commonly called Jacobus Prepositus[2] (the *Provost*), enlisting under Luther,[3] preached free Gospel principles. He was brought as a prisoner to Brussels, and induced by the threat of being burned to death, to recant, which he actually did in Feb. 1520, before the Papal Commissioner Jerome Alexander, the Emperor's confessor John Glapio, and several others. The doctrines which he revoked were similar to those which Luther had shortly before advocated in the Heidelberg disputation, and he professed principles which are certainly strongly opposed to those of the Reformation, *e.g.* "I believe that the works of the saints are in so far meritorious of eternal life, that they are free from all guilt. Of the works of the free will I believe that they are not all sinful, but that some of them being unmixed with guilt, merit eternal life, and consequently do not need pardoning mercy." Like so many others, Propst considered his retractation merely as the effect of outward compulsion. He afterwards wrote to his hearers in Antwerp that they were not to ascribe his fall to the doctrine but solely to his human frailty, and exhorted them, in matters of faith, not to trust to man, but to the Word of God alone. After the first act of persecution, Propst exposed himself to fresh imprisonment in Brussels, by appearing again as the defender of the principles of the reformation at Bruges. From this second imprisonment he escaped by the help of a friendly Franciscan, and having, in April 1522, passed some time with

[1] Is, says *Erasmus* in a letter of the year 1520 (Gerdes in l. c. s. 22), publice multis diebus disputavit adversus aliquot axiomata Lutheri, et disputavit ut Theologum decuit absque convitiis.

[2] See respecting him *Seckendorf* Hist. Luth. L. i. § 110. p. 179. Gerdes in l. c. s. 22—25.

[3] *Erasmus* writes of him to Luther on the 30th May 1519 (Ep. 427.): Est Antverpiae Prior ejus Monasterii vir pure christianus, qui te unice deamat, tuus olim discipulus, ut praedicat. Is omnium paene solus Christum praedicat, cæteri fere aut hominum fabulas, aut suum quaestum praedicant.

Luther at Wittemberg,[1] he continued to labour for the Gospel as preacher in St Mary's Church in Bremen.[2]

Shortly after, in the year 1521, there appeared in the town where John *Wessel* began and terminated his life, and as there can be no doubt left behind him the tradition of his Reformatory principles, an evangelical teacher of similar views, William *Frederici*, preacher in St Martin's in *Gröningen*,[3] a man, as it appears, of extraordinary gifts and learning. In a letter[4] addressed to him in the year 1521, from Louvain, Erasmus extols him as the pattern of a zealous, pure, and disinterested teacher of the Gospel, and as having acquired particular merit by assembling around him fellow-labourers of congenial sentiments. "You shine," says the great scholar, "before all by the purity of your life, by your indefatigable zeal in feeding the flock with Gospel doctrine,[5] and by collecting around you such of the clergy as by pure morals, and sacred learning, are both an ornament to the Church, and able to supply your place with the people,—so that here the new kind of teachers, never instituted by Christ, but which have been introduced by the negligence of the clergy, are quite superfluous. You are not a companion to the people at their pots, but their teacher, comforter, monitor, and faithful and affectionate adviser." The celebrated letter-writer also expresses a wish that there were many such men, in order that the world might either indignantly repugn the many licentious and vagrant priests, or these themselves be constrained to renounce their sloth, their luxurious living, and pursuit of pleasure, and addict themselves to true piety.

Cotemporaneously with these men, whom we may safely con-

[1] *Luther's* Brief an Spalatin in de Wette ii. 182. *Seckendorf* Hist. Lutheran. i. 179.

[2] *Gerdes* Hist. Ref. T. ii. p. 131.

[3] *Gerdes* pp. 25 and 26.

[4] The letter is in the appendix to the 3d part of *Gerdes* Ref. Gesch. Num. i., A. s. 6. It is preceded by a eulogium of Friderici from the pen of an anonymous author, in which we read: Tu patriae honos, Phrisiae decus, sacerdotum disciplina, plebis auctoritas, senatus consilium, orphanorum spes, egentium asylum, viduarum tutor, omnium recte viventium assertor.

[5] The Evangelical principles of Frederici and of his associates, the preacher of the Church, and the rector of the School, of St Martin, are stated in a work already quoted, *Hofstede de Groot* über die Brüderkirche zu Gröningen s. 21 and 22.

sider as the representatives of many who shared their sentiments, but who are less known, in the same locality as the first, and therefore probably also in connection with him, *Cornelius Grapheus* began his labours for pure evangelical doctrine. In the year 1520, he published *Gochi's* work on Christian liberty, translated into Dutch, with a polemical preface;[1] and followed it up in 1521, with the original Latin text, also preceded by a preliminary discourse of the same kind, and of which, in the foregoing part of this volume, we have communicated the substance. Shortly afterwards the diet at Worms was held; and there, as is well known, Charles V., with part of the princes, laid the ban of the empire upon *Luther*, and emitted a severe edict against his doctrines, and all who adhered to them. Under the same date, and at the same place as that edict (which, however, was not published until the 26th of May), upon the 8th of May, 1521, Charles passed a severe penal law against heresy in the Netherlands.[2] The young Emperor, who in Germany yielded to circumstances and adopted gentle measures, followed very different rules in his native country. He probably believed himself entitled to act in a more absolute and arbitrary manner in his hereditary dominions. It is supposed that under his government, and on a moderate reckoning, 50,000 men[3] suffered violent death, in various ways, on account of their faith. The court of Inquisition, recently instituted and forcibly introduced, operated powerfully to this end. In 1522, the year after the first imperial edict against the Lutheran heresy had been emitted, Charles V. appointed the Councillor of Brabant, Francis *van der Hulst*, and the Carmelite, *Nicolaus van Egmont*, two furious zealots, Inquisitors for the Netherlands, and it was into their hands that the person with whom we have here to do, had the misfortune to fall.

There can be little doubt, that shortly after the publication of

[1] This translation mentioned in Grapheus' Epistle to Carondiletus (*Gerdes* Hist. Ref. T. iii. p. 20.) I have never seen, and it may perhaps be wholly lost.

[2] It agrees in substance, and generally in language, with the edict of Worms. See Ordonnantien, Statuten, Edicten ende Placcaerten. van Vlaenderen. 2te Ausg. Antw. 1662. 1. 88.

[3] *Grotius* says 100,000. Annal. et Hist. de reb. Belg. L. i. p. 11. 12. This appears an oratorical exaggeration.

the imperial edict, and before the nomination of the Inquisitors, *Grapheus* had been seized and committed to prison at Brussels. On the 8th October 1521, he wrote from his prison a letter to John *Carondiletus*,[1] the Archbishop and Chancellor of Brabant, a person of great influence, and who, he hoped, would intercede for him with the Regent[1] and others on whom his fate depended. In this letter, *Grapheus* expresses profound distress at his situation, avers his innocence and implores mercy, endeavouring to show, that if he had failed, it was more the consequence of an error of understanding, than of bad intentions. He adjures Carondiletus, for the sake of his innocent children, of his young wife, of the services he had rendered to the Emperor, and finally of love to God and Christ, to take pity upon his condition, which was worse than that of a Jew or Heathen, the declared enemies of the Gospel, and if he could not do more, at least to procure for him a transference from the prison at Brussels, where he could be of no use to his family then suffering shame and misery, into another at Antwerp.

This sorrowful and almost too lugubrious epistle appears to have had no effect. *Grapheus* was still left for many a day in prison. Some time after, the captive also wrote a lament (Querimonia), which has been recently printed and published.[3] The poem, it is true, expresses the same sorrow and longing for deli-

[1] The letter appears in *Brandt* Hist. Ref. Belg. Vol. i. Lib. ii. p. 71. This book was not accessible to me. I have, however, taken the substance of the epistle from a dissertation by Janssen, which I shall forthwith cite.

[2] Margaret of Parma was personally anything but a fanatic. The following anecdote is related of her. The theologians of Louvain were complaining to her of the ruin of the Christian religion which Luther was occasioning. And who then is Luther? she enquired. The theologians informed her that he was an illiterate monk. To which she replied, "Well then, do you men of learning, who are many, write against the illiterate monk, who is but one, and assuredly the world will believe the many learned sooner than the *one* illiterate." *Gieseler* K. Gesch. iii. 1. s. 558, not 8.

[3] This poem was first brought into notice by *L. J. F. Janssen* in 1835 in the 6th part of the Archief voor kerkelijke Geschiedenis von. Kist und *Royaard* s. 154—167, and from a manuscript in Dordrecht, which contains what is either the original of Cornelius Grapheus himself, or at all events a copy of it by his friend Gerh. Geldenhauer. In an introductory epistle to Messrs Kist and Royaard, the editor treats in great detail of the unpublished treasure and its author. Mr *Janssen*,

verance as the letter. It is evidently, however, written in a more composed tone, and contains many excellent and sublime passages on the Divine aid and the presence of Christ, even under the most ignominious sufferings. The more natural way is to suppose this higher composure and resignation, as following after the first despair, rather than to reverse that order. Nor will it be out of place to give the sequence of thought and some of the chief passages in this lament, as being characteristic of the author. The *Querimonia, in carceris angustia,* as the inscription bears, *non sine lachrymis effusa,* is addressed to God and commences in the following manner:

O Pater, o rerum domitor, qui cernis ab alto
Omnia, quae terris fiunt, quaecunque profundo
Aequore, num attendis, quanta heu nos undique cingat
Tempestas? Cur, o genitor, tua pignora, cur sic
Deseris heu miseros tanto in discrimine? Num quid
Respicis haec? Eia haec tu respice, respice! Clemens
Eripe nos genitor, vel saltem numine sacro
Immisso oramus quemquam instigato, benigno
Qui monitu offensi componat Caesaris iram.

Grapheus then describes his deplorable and unhealthy condition, speaks of his weak breast, his hoarse throat, his parched tongue, his sunken eyes, his emaciated body, and his stomach that had lost its power, and then gives the following description of his person:

quite correctly, as I think, dates the *Querimonia* subsequently to the letter to Carondiletus, and at page 158 urges the following reason:— "The letter manifests a mind freshly wounded; the poem, on the other hand, a mind which has already experienced healing, inasmuch as there is in it a livelier trust in God and Christ, and greater resignation to their disposal. The letter is written in a frame bordering on despair; In the Lament the anguish is no longer so poignant." At the same time, as *Janssen* observes, p. 159, the Lament cannot possibly have been composed after 1524, because that was the year of the death of Philip of Burgundy, the Bishop of Utrecht, with whom Geldenhauer, the person to whom it was sent, was to treat in its author's favour. Geldenhauer then passed, as secretary, into the services of Maximilian of Burgundy. I beg leave to correct a small error in the learned epistle of *Janssen.* At p. 159, he enumerates, as friends of *Grapheus, Erasmus, Geldenhauer,* and (Conr.) *Goclenius,* who, no doubt, were so, but he adds to them the name of John of *Goch.* This is clearly a mistake, for Goch was already in his grave († 1475) when Grapheus was born (1482).

. . . Genua aegra labant, vix osibus haerent
Ossa, inculta horret facies, riget hispida barba,
Maxillae cedunt, nasus fit longior, horrent
Sqallore impexi crines, clauso aëre carcer
Paedore oppletur, moeror gravis omnia, tristis
Omnia luctus habet, non est noctuve dieve
Ulla quies.

The picture which he proceeds to draw of his prison, of the dim light, the oppressive air, and the total solitude, unbroken except by mice, spiders, and other vermin, we shall not here detail. As little shall we touch the affecting complaints which he makes of separation from his friends and relatives, or those, still more bitter, of the unceasing craft and activity of his enemies, by means of which he and his fellow-prisoners, (for, as the subscription shews,[1] they also are associated with himself in his lament.)

. . . . facti sumus undique magnum
Opprobrium, risus, spectaclum, abjectio, cunctis
Fabula nota, jocus, stupor, execratio, dirus
Sibilus, et quid non tandem? . . .

We rather turn to the passages which paint the sentiments of *Grapheus* as elevated and Christian, and worthy of an evangelical man. He asks, "Ought we under these circumstances to yield to despair?" and answers very beautifully:

Ah non,
Non desperandum est, nam si nos deserat orbis,
Optimus haud quaquam Christus nos deserit! Ecce,
Christus adest, micuit paries, micuere columnae
Carceris et tremulo resplendent lumine diri
Fornicis anfractus; medio stans lumine Christus
Accedit moestos, dextraque humaniter aegros
Coelesti mulcens, moerentia pectora curat
Unguine divino, languentesque erigit artus.
— — — — — —
Tanti est meliflui dulcis praesentia Christi.
Ipse enim nobiscum una comeditque bibitque,
Nobiscum vigilat, nobiscum dulce quiescit,

[1] He subscribes *C. Grapheus* una cum concaptivis. . . These were no doubt persons suffering confinement for their religious convictions.

Supponitque manum blandus, si omnia terrent
Occurrit, tetros abigens ea somnia visus.
Si quicquam petimus, nobis respondit amice;
Si legimus, lecturam aperit; si plaudimus, ipse
Applaudit nobis; moeror nos occupat, atrum
Moerorem extinguit; si desperamus, abunde
Confirmat Sacri mulcens dulcedine Verbi.

Grapheus now breaks forth into the praise of God, who had sent Jesus Christ to console the mourner, the broken-hearted and imprisoned. As the comforter is so near, and seals to him so certainly the Divine love, he resolves that he will no longer mourn, but says:

. . . Si nobiscum sit Christus, inanis
Est omnis timor, haud possit contingere quicquam
Adversum Christo ex animo fidentibus. . . .

At the same time, with the feelings of a man, he longs for deliverance, and trusts that Christ, if his holy wisdom finds it good, will yet conduct him from his prison, either by the direct aid of his Almighty hand, or by means of some secret spiritual influence, disposing the heart of the Emperor in his favour, or by sending him an intercessor like a messenger from heaven,

. . . molli qui afflamine mentem
Caesaream tentet, Majestatemque tremendam
Blanditus flectens, veniam pacemque misellis
Impetret. . . .

It is this passage at the close which brings to light the outward purpose of the poem. As shown by the old manuscript from which the impression was made, it was dedicated in the first instance to a man distinguished in his day, and who held the principles of the Reformation, Dr Gerhard *Geldenhauer* of Nymwegen.[1] This person was secretary to *Philip of Burgundy*, the

[1] Gerhard *Geldenhauer*, from Nymwegen (Noviomagus), originally a member of the Order of the cross, afterwards, like so many of the monks of the Netherlands, passed into the Evangelical Church, and escaped from his native country into Germany, where he lived and laboured in Strasburg, Augsburg, and especially in Marburg.

Bishop of Utrecht, a man who was himself not inaccessible to more liberal views, and who, on the other hand,[1] was held in great esteem by Charles V. *Grapheus* might thus hope, while pouring out his heart to his friend, that his friend would act the part of intercessor with the Bishop of Utrecht, and through him with the Emperor, or perhaps even directly with the Emperor himself, in his favour. Nay he may probably have cherished the expectation that his poetical effusion would reach the Emperor's own hands, for several passages at the end appear to have been written with this view. After saying,

> . . . Neque enim (confidimus, immo
> Et scimus) Caesar, cujus pulcherrima virtus
> Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos,
> Est tam vindictae cupiens, ut perdere malit
> Quam servare humiles—

In the last of these cities, he was for some time a professor of history and then of theology. On a journey to Wittenberg he was attacked and murdered by robbers on the 10th of Jan. 1542. He wrote several books on the history of the Netherlands, and particularly a biography of his former master, Bishop Philip of Utrecht. Of this work Andreæ and Foppens, who are very hostile to its author as an apostate, declare, that it is full of heresies (libellus hic totus hæreticus est). The theological works which he published in Germany are placed by the Tridentine Fathers in the first class of forbidden books. On the other hand the citizens of Marburg erected a monument to his memory in the Church of St Elizabeth, side by side with that of the celebrated *Hyperius*—and engraved upon it the following inscription :

> Hic *Noviomagi* requiescunt membra *Gerhardi*,
> Juxta hunc Andreas conditur *Hyperius*.
> Ut pia doctrinae concordia junxerat ambos,
> Sic idem amborum contegit ossa locus.
> Quos sociat tumulus, sociabunt coelica regna,
> Ut capiant fidei praemia justa suae.

Information respecting Geldenhauer may be found in Valer. *Andreae* Bibl. Belg. p. 273. *Foppens* Bibl. Belg. i. 349. Melch. *Adami* Vitae Theologorum p. 45. Biblioth. Bremens. Class. v. p. 218. *Gerdesii* Hist. Ref. T. iii. p. 41. Not. a. Adami, ignorant of his violent death, speaks of him as ending his days in peace at Marburg.

[1] See *Geldenhauer's* testimony respecting him in his Vita Philippi Burgundi in *Matthaei* Analect. Vol. I. p. 192—203, and in *Gerdesii* Hist. Ref. T. iii. p. 40.

he praises, in the liveliest terms, the pious, gentle, and forgiving disposition which the young Emperor inherited from his father and grandfather, and then concludes with the words:

> . . . Num clementissimus ergo
> In nos vel solos, humiles veniamque precantes,
> Prostratosque suis pedibus saevire superbus
> Incipiet? Primum in nos experietur acerbam
> Vindictam? Ah absit, quin et pietatis amore
> Consuetae accensus, paulo sedatior, ira
> Neglecta, offensam clemens donaverit omnem;
> Nam qui aliter potuit, cujus natura vel ipsa
> Est pietas, est ipsa etiam clementia, cujus
> Et posse et velle est omnis servare benigne?
> Haec spes non vana est, certa haec solatia nobis!

And yet even this hope was vain. The epistle produced no effect, whether it was that *Geldenhauer* did not act the part expected of him, or that he lacked ability to produce an impression in higher quarters. At last severe confinement and separation from his distressed family wholly broke the firmness of the poor man. He consented, probably at the instigation of the Inquisitors Hulst and Egmont,[1] to make a recantation. The act which for this purpose he executed with his own hand[2] on the 25th March 1522, is of great consequeuce for our purpose. According to all appearance, indeed, it was written not by *Grapheus* himself, but by the Inquisitors. The contents, however, give us a much more precise knowledge of the doctrines of *Grapheus* than we can derive from any other source, and at the same time, shew vividly what sort of proposals were made to such afflicted men, and what in their misery they were induced to do.

Respecting the statement of the principles of *Grapheus*, the deed of recantation agrees substantially with what we know from the Latin preface, to *Goch's* treatise De Libertate Christiana, of

[1] Their names are not indeed expressly mentioned, but the act of recantation bears, ... cum essem interrogatus et examinatus per Commissarios Caesareae Majestatis ad hoc deputatos. And this language applies only to them.

[2] This *Revocatio et Abjuratio* are found in D. *Gerdesii* Scrin. antiquar. T. v. p. 1. p. 496—508.

date 1521, but it adds many supplementary particulars which must have been taken[1] either from oral statements, or from the preface to the Dutch translation of the book, of the year 1520,[2] and in which the author seems to have embraced the side and doctrines of *Luther*, still more decidedly than appears from any other surviving document. As the sum of the Reformatory doctrines delivered by him at an earlier date, we meet with the following:[3] "We Christians have, for 800 years and more, been reduced from freedom into wretched slavery, namely, since the days of Boniface III., who first received from the Emperor Phokas the name of Supreme Priest. For, in virtue of this designation, his followers have usurped authority to make laws, and yet no pope has the right to impose upon men, not to say upon Christians, any laws which shall be obligatory under penalty of mortal sin. It is doubtful whether Peter possessed any higher authority than the other Apostles, and least it is impossible to demonstrate from Scripture that he did. The Pope is set up to us as an idol. All laymen are priests, and, if we except women and children, have equally a legal right to consecrate the Sacraments, although they would commit sin if they did it without permission. Just as of old, all with the same exception of women, were without distinction permitted publicly to teach and explain the Scripture, so is this now lawful for all, and not merely for masters, bachelors, and licentiates, or those who are appointed to the work by the Church. The form of prayer which ecclesiastics use in reading and chaunting the canonical hours, and for other things such as rosaries, &c., is superstitious, and belongs to Jewish ceremonialism. It is a slavish practice to command us on certain days and hours to assemble in the Church for prayer,

[1] Hist. abregée de la Réformat. des Païs bas, traduite du Hollandois de Ger. *Brandt*, T. i. p. 18. *Gerdes*. Hist. Reform. iii. 20. *Schröckh* K. Gesch. seit der Reform. ii. 353.

[2] Both of these sources are mentioned in the *Revocatio*, the latter not quite expressly: Specialiter autem reprobo quosdam articulos, quorum aliquos scripsi in *quadam Praefatione* ad quendam librum intitulatum de libertate Christiana, editum a Johanne Pupper, de Gochi, quosdam vero me tenuisse *inter confabulandum* atque sensisse confessus sum et propria manu scripsi.

[3] *Revoc.* in l. c. p. 500—502. I have arranged the propositions, which are somewhat arbitrarily collocated, in proper order.

seeing that of old prayer was made everywhere and without injunction. In like manner Christians are brought into bondage by fasting, as presently practised in the Church, and by other ecclesiastical enactments, such for instance as that which imposes the obligation to confess once a year, or that which sanctions the monastic vow. Nothing of the kind, unless expressly contained in Scripture, obliges any man on pain of mortal sin. Even auricular confession is not of divine, but only of human institution. It is not lawful to accept money for dispensing the sacraments, preaching the word of God, or performing funeral services. The preachers of the Divine word deserve to be censured for so frequently introducing quotations from the Schoolmen. The works we perform are in no way meritorious, and we ought to put no trust in our merits. When Paul writes to the Galatians, 'If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing,' he means thereby, If you trust to your works Christ can do you no good. In the same way indulgences are of no efficacy. The Gospel is now born again and Paul raised to life, by the works of Luther and others who embrace his doctrine, and hold up to light the liberty of the Gospel. Hence we ought to read what these men and their successors have written, because they decidedly reject the subtilties of the Schoolmen and teach Christ.—And more than all the works of these Schoolmen, sacred as they may be, ought the treatise of John of Goch to be read. The Pope's sentence which condemned Luther, his person, and doctrine, was unjust and inequitable, and the same may be said of the Emperor's decrees, for Luther's doctrine must be regarded as sound, especially in the points here touched, and ought not to have been condemned, unless it had been refuted with reasons."

All these propositions, which with some slight exceptions and modifications, contain a general summary of Gospel truth, *Grapheus*, in his recantation, recalled, as either openly heretical, or secandalous, or offensive to the pious, and deceptive to the simple. He condemned all heresy, especially that propounded in his writings and discourses by Martin Luther, together with all the articles which he had himself set down in his preface to Goch's work. On the other hand, he came under an oath to adhere constantly to the true doctrine of the Catholic Church, and

declared all who were in contradiction with it to be worthy of eternal damnation, and himself, if ever that should be his own case, obnoxious to the laws of the Church and to eternal punishment.[1]

It appears to me that this recantation broke the true moral vigour of *Grapheus*, and that his subsequent life, although he was still in the fortieth year of his age,[2] and lived thirty-six years longer, was ever after destitute of its pristine higher force and influence. He had not been convinced of the falsehood of his earlier principles, and yet he had subjected himself absolutely to the ecclesiastical power. The act of submission, and the oath he swore, prevented him from again taking the field against the corruption of the Church, and yet his inward inclination could not but be always tempting him to act the part of a Reformer. In this manner he was brought into a false and ambiguous position, similar to that of *Erasmus*, during the latter period of his life,—a circumstance which, besides their literary fellowship, seems to have involved the deeper reason why, after the catastrophe, he attached himself particularly to that celebrated scholar, and was honoured by him with intimacy and confidence. It was after his recantation, that the most powerful Reformatory efforts were made, and the boldest champions of the evangelical doctrine came forward in the Netherlands. *Henry of Zütphen*,[3] Prior of the Augustinians at *Antwerp*,[4] appeared as a bold confessor upon the field. Henry *Voes* and John *Esch*, the two youthful martyrs, whom Luther has so beautifully celebrated, and who also

[1] Then follows p. 502—508 a further statement in which the several propositions are refuted and retracted. But as this statement manifestly proceeds not from *Grapheus* himself, but from the Inquisitors, and consists of a mere counter-position of the Catholic doctrines to the averments of the subject of the inquest, I reckon it unnecessary to introduce it here.

[2] In page 137 of this work, *Grapheus* is inadvertently spoken of in 1521 as still twenty-nine years of age. It ought to have been thirty-nine.

[3] See *Gerdes*, Hist. Ref. iii. 28—30.

[4] Almost all the *Augustinians* at Antwerp took Luther's side. Their monastery was in the month of October 1522 wholly destroyed. *Luther's* letter to Wenc. Link, 19th Dec. 1522, in De Wette ii. 265. This is another proof that the members of this order were more liberally and evangelically disposed than the rest of the monks. See supra. p. 107. 108.

belonged to the Augustinian order, were burnt at Brussels in 1523.[1] In the same year several worthy ecclesiastics and men of rank at Gröningen, Herm. *Abring*, J. Alb. *Timmermann*, Gerh. *Pistoris*,

[1] They are mentioned by *Gerdes* in his Ref. Gesch. B. 3. s. 31 ff. *Seckendorf* Hist. Luth. Lib. 1. fol. 280. *Sleidanus* Commentar. p. 52. 53. *Schelhorn* Amoen. iv. 412. But more particular attention is due to what *Luther* says of them first in a letter to the Christians in Holland and Brabant (in De Wette ii. 362), accompanied by a list of the articles for which the two Augustinian monks at Brussels were burned to death (printed in Walch xxi. 45), and again in the incomparable heroic Ode, in which he has extolled their martyrdom. This poem, of which a Latin and Dutch translation are to be found in Part V. of *Kist's* and *Royaard's* kirchenhist. Archiv. s. 463 ff., begins with the words:

Ein neues Lied wir heben an,
Das walt' Gott, unser Herre!

and after relating the main particulars in the history of their martyrdom, concludes with three magnificent stanzas of which the translator has attempted to reflect the sense. The pith and simplicity are inimitable:

These ashes on the winds shall float,
The world's wide surface o'er,
Stopped by no river, gulf, or moat,
And drop on every shore.
The cruel foe shall then be shamed
To hear, with voices new,
The truth by even the dead proclaimed,
Whom they, to silence, slew.

And yet fresh falsehoods they invent,
And scatter far and near,
To gild their bloody deed intent
And calm their secret fear.
They slander even across the tomb,
Those who so nobly died,
And say that ere they met their doom
The youths the truth denied.

But let them lie—their wicked lies
Will but augment their pain,
For us, our thanks to God shall rise
Whose word returns again.
Yes, winter's past, and summer sweet,
Stands waiting to come in,
The flowers awake, God will complete
Who did the work begin.

and Nicol. *Lesdorp*, held a formal dispute with the Dominicans upon the power of the Pope and the institutions of the Catholic Church.[1] The Jurist Corn. *Honius* and Will. *Gnapheus*, rector of the school at Haag, subjected themselves, as patrons of the Reformation, to imprisonment.[2] In short, everywhere, and especially at Antwerp, where *Grapheus* lived, the combustible material caught fire and blazed forth. Of *Grapheus*, however, we hear no more. It is not as if he had wholly withheld his convictions. On the contrary, it appears by a letter from *Erasmus*, that in the later period of his life, he was made to endure fresh vexations for his liberal opinions, and had to struggle with many adversaries: But he no more attracted attention as a bold and spontaneous confessor of the doctrines of the Reformation, and a a determined champion in its cause.

In periods of great commotion and rapid change, there are many whose mission is confined to a single and often a brief period of their lives, and who, when they have fulfilled it, cease to be influential powers, retire into the shade, and, though they may long survive, are dead to public affairs, and generally unhappy in their own bosoms. This was the case on a great scale with *Erasmus*, and so was it upon a less with *Grapheus*. The former, destined in the history of the world to effect that enlightenment of science and the Church which preceded the Reformation, found himself, when the decisive hour for action struck, no longer at his post. He could not with his whole soul assent to the movement, and yet he could as little dissent from it, and therefore, while he still continued to act as the man of greatest genius and learning, he was yet obliged, with the deepest reluctance, to resign the leadership to *Luther* and his companions, who appeared to him little better than barbarians. In like manner, although in a lower sphere, *Grapheus* appears to have been destined to introduce upon the stage of life the previously unknown reformer *Goch*, and to kindle, at a period big with events, the first spark of light in his native land. This he did with alacrity and spirit. The unity of his nature, however, was now broken by rude power, to which he could not inwardly rise superior. Others take

[1] *Gerdes* in l. c. pp. 32 and 33.

[2] Ibid. p. 33—35.

his place. We have therefore nothing further to relate concerning him, except his *connection with Erasmus* and his *labours as an author*.

Grapheus was delivered from his imprisonment after his recantation, but we know not whether soon or late. He returned to his family and professional duties. These, however, seem also to have received a blow from his persecution. He had to contend with adversaries, and, as appears from a statement by Erasmus, also with poverty, at least in the evening of his life. So much the more beautiful was the sympathy which the latter felt for him. In 1529 he wrote to him the following letter from Basle, which is in many respects highly characteristic.[1] "My very dear Cornelius, readily would I have complied with your wish and edited your poem, had I not been dissuaded by two considerations. In the first place, it did not appear to me to contain enough of the poetical vein to justify the belief that you would reap from it much honour. And next, I found in it not a little which would have increased the hostile disposition towards you,[2] and that appeared to me disadvantageous for your circumstances, especially as matters at present stand. Your situation fills me, although myself not unassailed, with great anxiety; but the lot which God appoints to us we must, I believe, bear with fortitude of mind. It is wickedness[3] which has called forth this storm, but it seems to me that a different race of monks are rising up worse than the former, and that, on both sides, men are committing greater and more conspicuous acts of madness.[4] Neither do I see any end, unless the Lord, who is the only true actor, interfere in the plot, and pronounce that solemn word of the tragedies, πολλαὶ μορφαὶ τῶν δαιμονίων. Meanwhile it appears to me the most advisable course to take our stand upon that firm rock which will yield to no storm, until the tumult gives place to a calm. A good conscience is to one's self a great consolation, and

[1] Epistolar. Des *Erasmi*, Ph. Melanchthonis, Thom. Mori et Lud. Vivis, Londin. MDCXLII. Lib. XX. Ep. 106. p. 1058. The letter is dated Basil. Non. Mart. MDXXIX.

[2] invidiam. This is a sufficient indication that the poem expressed liberal sentiments.

[3] improbitas.

[4] in utraque parte fortiter atque insigniter insanitur.

to that I would also invite you, did I not know that you have always cherished the purest sentiments. The Lord is refining his gold in this furnace, that it may be wholly freed from dross. Were I near I would rejoice in being serviceable to you, and to your brother in all things. As matters stand, however, I see not what I could do, and the confusion that reigns around us in this quarter, rumour has no doubt long ago carried to your ears. I wish it may go well with you and with all of yours." The significant passage which speaks of the madness of both parties, and of a new description of monks that had sprung up, coming from Erasmus, in the year 1529, I can refer to nothing but the Reformation, which he would then, as he constantly does, designate as a tragedy, not yet played to the end, and awaiting the *Deus ex machina*. On this supposition, by the new description of *monks* he must have meant the Reformers themselves and their adherents, of course not in the literal sense of the word, but inasmuch as he feared or believed that, like the obscurantist monks of a former day, they might create a dislike and contempt for the study of classical literature and the humane sciences, the only things dear to himself. If this interpretation is correct, it is scarcely to be doubted that Erasmus presupposed in *Grapheus* similar sentiments, and consequently an intermediate position between the two great conflicting parties.

We have another but less copious epistle from his celebrated countryman to *Grapheus*, dated at Friburg in the year 1534.[1] *Erasmus* is delighted with the news brought to him by a common friend, that *Grapheus* is "in a better condition both of mind and body, and in more favourable circumstances." On the contrary, he himself bitterly complains of the *podagra (gout)*, or, as he should rather call it, the *panāgra*,[2] because it goes through all his members, and leaves his old body so little rest that it will soon be worn away. The chief object of the Epistle is to ask his friend to procure for him a faithful Dutch servant.[3] He wishes one who is not young, but healthy, not superstitious, and

[1] Dat. Frib. iii. Id. Mart. in the edit. cited Lib. xxx. Ep. 64. p. 1952 and 1953. The title bears : Eruditissimo viro Cornelio Grapheo.

[2] *All-sick*, a pain over the whole body.

[3] Erasmus will not have a German. The Germans he says are a *εὔθυνον γένος*.

no sectarian. Learning is not required, except that he should understand Latin, and be able to write it tolerably. The completion of the bargain, and the terms, *Erasmus* entrusts in confidence to his friend, wishing to him and his family all happiness, and recommending to him the care of his health.

The same affectionate interest for *Grapheus*, *Erasmus* retained until his death. On the 12th February 1536, he made his will. In this he ordains, among other things, that the money deposited with Eberhard Goclenius[1] should be distributed in the manner which he shall afterwards point out. On the Sabbath after Easter, in a very remarkable document, to which an abstract of his life was appended, he gave to Conrad *Goclenius*,[2] a very dear friend and distinguished man, the teacher of Latin in the Collegium Trilingue of Louvaine, and an equally intimate friend of *Grapheus*, directions how to distribute the money. In this it is said, "Let fifty golden florins and forty-six and a half Rhenish be given to Cornelius *Grapheus*, whom I suspect to be in needy circumstances, and who is a man worthy of a better fate."[3] Not long afterwards, upon the 12th July 1536, Erasmus departed this life.

Grapheus survived him 22 years. He made repeated appearances as an author, not however, as it appears, in the special field of theology, or on any particular side, but in that of general literature.[4] He was a poet, an orator, a historian, a linguist,

[1] See *Foppens* Biblioth. Belg. i. 189.

[2] It is prefixed to the London edition of the Epistles of *Erasmus*, already frequently cited, and which, a few pages farther on, contains the will.

[3] Quinquaginta Floreni aurei et quadraginta sex Renenses cum dimidiato (sint) Cornelio *Grapheo*, quem suspicor *egere*, virum *dignum meliore fortuna*. And in a subsequent passage: Jussi, ut de mea pecunia numeres Ceratino Florenes aureos XXV. Id si factum est, *Graphei* summam sarciam ex ea pecunia, quae est Antverpiae.

[4] The earliest enumeration of the *works of Grapheus* is to be found in Valer. *Andreae* Biblioth. Belg. p. 150, 151, the next in *Foppens* Bibl. Belg. T. i. p. 201, 202. *Grapheus* appears to have entered the field as author for the *first* time, in 1515, at the age of 33, with the Exprobratio in Diocletianum pro Divo Pancratio, Lovan. ap. Theod. Martinum, and for the *last* time in 1550, consequently when he was 68 years of age, with a Pompa Spectaculorum in susceptione Philippi II. Antverp. 1550. fol. Between these works lie the following: Conjugandi et Declinandi Regulae, Antverp. 1529. 8.—Conflagratio Templi

and musician,[1] and these various tastes seem to have regained their dominion over him. Where his works touch the field of religion, it was done more in a poetical way, than to promote any particular tendency. *Grapheus* thus continued to be an influential man, but his theological character was extinguished, and as a Reformer he halted, like Erasmus, behind his age. He died in his 76th year, upon the 19th of December 1558, at Antwerp, and was interred in the Church of the Holy Virgin, in a place of burial which he had already prepared for his wife, who predeceased him.[2] Among his children there was a son called Alexander, who upheld his father's fame, and acquired some celebrity as a poet. A *portrait* of *Grapheus* has also come down to us.[3] According to it he must have been a man of powerful frame and strong features, with a bold and prominent nose, large and fiery eyes, and protruding lips, partly concealed by his beard. His forehead was high and deeply furrowed. His hair thick and curly, and worn somewhat short, covered the whole of his massive head, and encircled his cheek and chin with an equally thick and curly beard.

D. Mariae Antverpiensis, versu heroico. Antv. ap. Joh. Grapheum, 1534.—Monstrum anabaptisticum, rei Christianae perniciem, 1535.—Sacrorum Bucolicorum Eclogae III, Antv. ap. J. Grapheum 1536. 8.—Descriptio Pacis inter Franciscum I. et Carolum V. Antv. ap. J. Coccium. 1540. 4.—Gratulatio Carolo V. Imp. pro reditu illius ex Hispania in Belgium (1520): item alteram pro reditu per medias Gallias (1540), Antv. exc. Coccius, 1540. 8.—Descriptio Senatus Antverpiani, a Carolo V. instituti, Antv. ap. Coccium, 1541.—Enchiridion Principis ac Magistratus Christiani, Colon. apud Cervicornum, 1541.—Paraphrasis Psalmi cxxiii. contra Mart. Rossemium, Antv. 1543.—Without date: Carmen Pastorale, quo Christi Nativitas describitur.—Querela proditi Christi, contra Turco-Christianos.—Colloquiorum Formulae, e Terentii Comoediis.

[1] Andreæ and Foppens call him *Cantor eximius.*

[2] See the epitaph upon the spouses in *Foppens* Biblioth. Belg. i. 202. Here the wife is designated Matrona et prudentissima et pietatis cultrix eximia.

[3] I have it before me in two forms *Foppens* Biblioth. Belg. T. i. between p. 200 and 201, and in *Gerdes.* Hist. Ref. T. iii. p. 120.

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